



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 2, 2014

CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO AND COMMISSIONER BRATTON ANNOUNCE SAFEST AUGUST – NOVEMBER PERIOD SINCE MODERN CRIME STATISTICS BEGAN IN 1993

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everyone. Last year we talked about a safer city and a fairer city. We talked about how we can bring crime down and keep communities safer and in fact, at the same time, draw police and community closer together. In fact, those two concepts go hand-in-hand. They are mutually necessary. Commissioner Bratton and I, over this last year, have talked about a vision for this city, which the NYPD is here to protect and respect. We're creating a dynamic where people all over this city, in every neighborhood, understand that the NYPD is crucial to their safety and the safety of their family, and is there to work with them for the betterment of our society. I've believed all along — I know Commissioner Bratton has believed throughout his extraordinary career — that when you create that unity, you can reach higher heights of safety and find possibilities that no one knew existed when there was a division between police and community.

After 11 months, we can say that this vision is coming to fruition. We can see with our own eyes, we can experience in our own lives a safer city and a city that is becoming more unified – a beginning of a deepening of a partnership between police and community. We can see the foundation being laid. We can see the beginning of real progress.

We'll talk about these statistics and these developments in a moment, but first I want to talk about the many leaders who are here, all of whom deserve our thanks for the progress that's been made. You're going to hear from some elected officials in a few moments. I also want to thank a woman who's provided tremendous leadership as the chair of the City Council Committee on Public Safety, Vanessa Gibson. I want to thank her for her partnership in all we have done in this administration. And I want to introduce some of the leaders of the NYPD who are here and really deserve immense credit for their relentless efforts to keeping us safe and for bringing us closer together. I want to thank and acknowledge Chief of Department James O'Neill, Chief of Patrol Carlos Gomez, Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce, Chief of Housing James Secreto, Chief of Transit Joe Fox, and a partner from the labor movement, who represents the captains – Roy Richter, the president of the Captains Endowment Association. Thank you all for your leadership. I also want to acknowledge from my administration, Liz Glazer, director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, who's played a key role in the development of our plans.

Now, in the end, we judge things by the numbers. In the end, we hold ourselves to the standard of showing that we have real proof of the progress that we have made. The numbers we're going to go over today are just plain extraordinary, and Commissioner Bratton and his team — and of course, all the men and women of the NYPD — deserve tremendous credit. You know, when I came into this job, people always talked about last year — last year was an amazing year in this city in terms of bringing down crime. A lot of people in the PD and beyond talked with reverence about what had been achieved last year — rightfully so. The goal was to do better and as we built up momentum, we saw what was possible. So here's the bottom line — the city's crime rate continues to go down. In fact, overall crime is down 4.4 percent this year compared to the same point last year.

We talked about the historic month of August 2014 – the safest August since the beginning of the CrimeStat system — excuse me, the CompStat system –when in August, we saw, across a variety of categories, improvement as we had never been in any month in the previous 23 years. We then repeated that success in September, repeated that success in October. Now, that success has been repeated again in November. Four full months – August through November – the lowest homicides for those four months since our modern approach to crime statistics began in 1994. And overall crime statistics – the strongest we have had in those 23 years. It’s an extraordinary achievement.

Here at Ingersoll Houses, there’s been real progress and we come back here because it’s an example of what all these efforts are meant to achieve. We’re here in one of the largest concentrations of public housing anywhere in the city – anywhere in the country, in fact. And because of the extraordinary efforts of the NYPD working closely with community residents and community leaders, crime here in Ingersoll Houses is down 18 percent this year – 18 percent – absolutely remarkable. And I’ve talked about the statistics because that’s how we judge ourselves but when you talk to people who live here, when you talk to families who use this wonderful community center, you realize what this means in human terms. People feel safer. People are able to go about their lives without some of the fear they’ve felt in the past. And we know that real change is achieved by working closely with the community, finding out what the community believes will work – what the community needs, adapting our strategies, creating that kind of partnership. We met with Ingersoll residents back in January to start this dialog. I heard their concerns. My team heard their concerns. The NYPD heard their concerns. And we invested – we invested in a variety of anti-violence efforts in public housing — \$210 million over the course of this year so far. And not just for additional police presence, which is crucial, but for additional lighting, for additional recreational programs like the ones that happen right here in this gym, that gives kids a positive alternative, that mean so much to families. These investments have had a real impact. And then we came back here in August, saw this center. I think the night I was here August, there were literally 300 young people in this building. It was a Friday night, I believe. It was a night where 300 young people, on a summer night, were in a safe, positive environment, away from the some of the challenges out on the streets. And you’ll always hear the best evidence on why that matters from our police officers who understand so deeply that giving kids that positive alternative is one of the tools that police need to succeed.

So we made those investments. We kept this community center open longer hours throughout the summer so more and more young people could have that positive alternative, and it worked. And we know that this path we’re on, this journey we’re on, is about listening to the will of the people. It’s about listening to the aspirations of the people and acting on it. That’s what last year was all about. That’s what this year has been about, in terms of implementing this vision. Obviously, last year the debate was so much about stop and frisk, and rightfully so. I said we were going to fix a broke strategy. Over the first three quarters of this year, the number of stops – excuse me – the number of stops are down 79 percent. Over the first three quarters of this year, the stops are down 79 percent. That’s a profound impact in people’s lives. We announced a new policy on low-level marijuana arrests just weeks ago. In the first two full weeks of this new policy, marijuana arrests are down 61.2 percent – extraordinary progress. And again, I thank Commissioner Bratton and his team — 61.2 percent reduction in marijuana arrests.

Now we know that the broken policy of stop and frisk in the past, and we know that the approach to marijuana arrests that was taken historically, disproportionately affected African-American and Latino communities. We know that to create a deeper sense of fairness in our city, we had to act on these issues and not just in words, but in material action. People had to feel the difference in their lives. That difference is beginning to be felt more and more deeply, but there’s much more ahead. Commissioner Bratton has rightfully point out that sustained change comes from the way that you train the police force with a vision of where we’re going and showing people the best approach the get there. The Commissioner has done something unprecedented – committed to retraining every one of our police officers in how to work in a more unified manner with the community and how to avoid excessive force. These are the kinds of approaches that will have a lasting impact on this city. And we’re going to have a lot more to say on our training efforts later this week.

Obviously, we took other steps in the area of oversight – appointing the first ever inspector general, reinforcing the Civilian Complaint Review Board so it can work more quickly and fairly for everyone involved — for community residents and police officers alike, making it a more meaningful oversight entity. And we’ve announced a major new investment in mental health programs – \$130 million dollars over the coming years to help address what is the root of so many of the challenges faced in the criminal justice system — helping ensure that more individuals who are mentally ill get treatment instead of jail-time, helping to go to the core of the problem. All of these efforts will, over time, change the reality neighborhood by neighborhood in this city. And as people see change and feel change, we believe they’ll have less and less need to ask for redress of their grievances. We see a bit of that happening already – I mentioned the reinvigorated CCRB. As these reforms have started to take effect, we see people turning to the CCRB less because they’re having fewer problems. January through October of this year, complaints lodged with the Civilian Complaint Review Board are down 7 percent, and that’s just the beginning. We want and effective a strong CCRB, but we’re also pleased when things are working so well on the ground – in our neighborhoods – that people feel like they don’t have to go to the CCRB. That’s the ultimate goal.

I was in Washington yesterday and the conversation was somber. Look, this nation is in mourning right now. As I said, before I left on my trip, some young people have died who should still be with us today and that has caused a national pain, a national sense of grieving, a disconnect between our values and some of the reality we’re living. And we have to address these problems head-on. We have to approach policing in a different and better way. We have to bring police and community closer together. The meeting yesterday with President Obama and criminal justice experts from around the country, and civil rights leaders, elected officials – the president, to his great credit, focused on community policing, focused on the exact same kind of approaches that Commissioner Bratton has used to effectively over his career – that are, more and more, the core of what we’re doing here. The president focused on the kinds of investments we need to make to build trust between police and community. One of the things the president rightfully has focused on is body cameras, and later this week we’ll be rolling out a pilot program related to body cameras here in this city and we will again have more to say on that in detail later this week. But one thing we can say for sure – body cameras are one of the ways to create a real sense of transparency and accountability – you know, one of the ways we can bring police and community closer together.

In New York City, it is never surprising to us that we face challenges. It’s never surprising to us that so much is happening that every day we have to work harder to overcome. New Yorkers, I’ve always said, are resilient by nature, able to take on challenges that maybe would be daunting in other places, but here, we consider them normal. We think it’s normal that we can bring crime down while bringing police and community closer together. We think that that theoretically impossible feat is quite possible here in New York City. We’ve got the right leadership in the NYPD. We’ve got the right commitment from our elected officials. It’s something we can do. Since January, we’ve seen this plan taking effect and moving us forward. A lot of reform has happened. A lot more reform will come, and we know it will build a momentum of its own. And each and every day, people will find greater ability to work with their police force for the safety of all.

Just a few in Spanish before I call upon Commissioner Bratton –

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, I want to bring up Commissioner Bratton. I just want to take you back to the day – a day I’m very, very proud of, when I had the honor – because the people of this city chose me to lead them – I had the honor of choosing this man as our police commissioner. Some of you were there that day. You remember, he spoke about the commitment he has had, literally since his childhood, to bring police and community together. He spoke about the notion of policing being compassionate, respectful, constitutional. This is a man who has done more to bring down crime in more places than anyone who’s walked this earth, but he does it with a keen, keen sense of the way forward being with the community – hand-in-hand with the community. He’s shown it works and it’s going to keep working here. Our police commissioner, Bill Bratton.

Police Commissioner Bill Bratton: Good morning, pleasure to be here with all of you. And one individual who was not introduced in the lineup from my department is Dermot Shea, who heads our CompStat unit. He's the successor to the system that Jack Maple created back in 1994 and a lot of the crime information – crime figures we give you – preliminary numbers, are usually developed by that CompStat unit.

I'd like to flesh out a little bit of what the mayor had to say relative to both the crime numbers – but what's going on in the department – that as reference, this week we began the training relative to the video camera initiative – the body camera initiative. Also this month, we began the training of the initial 22,000 officers that we have committed to the three-day training and later this week we'll events around both of those training initiatives. I point them out because in the midst of so much of the controversy, so much of the rhetoric, and so much of the issues that we're dealing with, we lose sight that the department has been moving forward in many ways –retraining, technology, and even the area of technology – we had an earlier event about a month ago or so announcing a \$150 million dollar initiative to acquire tablets for all of our police vehicles and 35,000 smartphones for our police officers.

There's a lot happening in the NYPD. A lot of leadership changes are reflected with the individuals who are up here with me. The new leadership team at the NYPD – the operational leadership – these are the individuals who have shown themselves over these last number of months capable of working with the 35,000 cops and 15,000 civilians we have to keep driving the crime numbers down, to keep working with the various oversight entities that we are dealing with – inspector general, CCRB, federal monitor – so that we can do it all. And we have been doing it all and that's the real story of the NYPD.

Crime is down and dramatically in many areas — historic lows in many areas. Relationships with the community – that certainly we are dealing with some controversial issues this year, but dealing with them successfully and using them as a way of drawing closer to the community rather than drawing apart from it. With the strong support of the political leadership, apart from the mayor – some of who's here and will be speaking in a moment – that we are making, I would think, great progress in this city at this time.

Let me just expand, if I may, on the mayor's crime comments. In terms of overall crime so far this year, the preliminary figures through November 30 – 11 months into the year – we've had 4,500 fewer index crimes. Those are the seven major crime categories. As the mayor referenced, that's a 4.4 percent decline overall. But the 21-year decline, the modern era, if you will – the CompStat era, going back to 1993 – that index crime is down 75 percent in this city. Murder – 21 fewer murders so far this year, 6.8 percent decline. Going back 21 years – an 83 percent decline. Rapes – 37 fewer rapes this year, 2.9 percent decline. But going back 21 years – 58 percent decline. Robberies down an astonishing 2,600 incidents. Robbery is one of those bellwether crimes – 2,600 fewer incidents. Lowest number of robberies we've ever recorded – 14.4 percent decline and an 80 percent decline since 1993. Burglaries – 660 decline, 4.1 percent decline, 83 percent since 1993. Grand larcenies – a significant part of the grand larcenies are the theft of electronic equipment, iPhones, smartphones – they're down by 1,400 – 3.4 percent decline – 49 percent over the 21-year period of time. That decline, however, is very important because recently we put 250 detectives into a grand larceny unit, working on all elements of the cybercrime issue that we're now facing. And that decline is directly reflective of many of the efforts they've been making and in the coming weeks we'll be announcing a number of major cases that that unit has produced that will drive those numbers down even further. In terms of auto theft – auto theft is up by about 290 incidents so far this year. An increase of about 4 percent – the one crime category that's up, but overall, in the 21 years, it's down by 93 percent – the largest decline of any crime category. Shootings are up about 46 incidents as of November 30th. That's an average of about one a week in a city of 8.5 million people. So even with that decline, down dramatically from earlier reports in the spring. In the spring, facing the increase that we were experiencing at that time, we initiated a number of strategic initiatives – Operation All Out – summer over time initiative in housing developments and throughout 15 of the city's precincts that were experiencing that crime increase and we were able to push those numbers down pretty dramatically.

Arrests overall for index crime are up by 2,200. Within certain of our areas, housing – housing overall has seen a 5.3 percent decline in crime so far this year. Murder’s down about 4 percent – we’ve had 48 murders in housing developments this year down, down two from the same period last year. In this development where we’re located, we’ve had an overall decline of 18 percent, as the mayor referenced, 48 reported part one versus 59. Murders – we have not had a murder in Ingersoll in the last two years. Shootings – we’ve had two so far this year, two last year, so there’s been no increase in that category. In the 88th precinct, overall, there’s a 3 percent decline in crime – Ingersoll is located in the 88. Murders are down by 66 percent in the 88th precinct. There were six last year, there are two this year.

In transit, Joe Fox here – Joe’s been doing an outstanding job. In transit, transit is down 13.8 percent – their crime. Robberies are down 29 percent – 397. On an average day in the New York City subway system – with 5.5 to 6 million riders – on an average day, we have five reported crimes. Phenomenal when you think of what it was when I was here in 1990. So, the leadership team that’s helping to drive this is here but the 35,000 cops that deserve credit and the community groups that work with them – this is a good news story. A story that is unfortunately, I don’t think, has really gotten out there. There’s been so much else happening nationally and locally that we’re losing sight of the fact that the department has been making extraordinary progress. This mayor has been extraordinarily supportive of this department. With DA Cy Vance – the \$150 million for technology, over the summer months – tens of millions of dollars of overtime to staff up the precincts that were most distressed and supporting the training initiatives that I’ve referenced – that \$35 million that it’s going to cost to retrain every member of this department. So we’re in a good place in terms of the resources we have, the quality of the cops we have, and, most importantly, the productivity that they are delivering. So it is, by and large, a good news story.

Also, the department is – with the leadership team in place – is equipped in leadership and resources to deal with the controversies of the day. Whether it’s the marches, the protests, the demonstrations – that we will deal with those fairly, equitably, allow people to demonstrate, so long as they operate within the law, and that we have shown over the space of the last several weeks, the demonstrations – a total in this city of about 30 arrests with no violence and no major disturbances. So we’re working very hard to allow people to indulge in their constitutional rights, while at the same time working to protect the interests of the other 8 million people who live in the city.

With that Mr. Mayor, if I could turn it back to you.

Mayor: Thank you very much. Thank you, commissioner. Now that’s an extraordinary report. I want to thank the commissioner, particularly for putting this in perspective of the entire timeframe since CompStat began. I think it’s something all New Yorkers should be proud of and, again, very appreciative at the men and women of the NYPD.

Our elected leaders have been our partners in all we have done and have been, rightfully, voices calling for us to achieve reform, while keeping crime down. And that accountability has been important to the progress that we’ve made. And our public advocate, Tish James, is playing the role as it was meant to be – a voice of conscious of us on a whole host of issues and always calling for transparency and accountability. I know she’s been a particular booster of the notion that body cameras will be an important step forward for this city. I’d like to welcome comments from our public advocate, Tish James.

[Public Advocate Letitia James Speaks]

Mayor: Thank you very much. Thank you.

Mayor: We are going to have questions now on topic and then we’ll do questions off topic. On topic – Courtney?

Question: You are talking about Ingersoll Houses, but I'm wondering if you have any statistics on the 15 developments that you [inaudible] how are they doing? And I didn't hear anything about shootings in public housing because I remember, back in the summer, that was a major issue and something your administration was working on.

Mayor: I will start and then I know Liz Glazer, who helped to put together that plan, and Chief Secreto may have specifics they want to share. The idea of that plan – and it was put together quickly, but I think very effectively – was to build a different kind of foundation for safety. In 15 developments, they accounted for 20 percent-plus of all of our major crimes in public housing. And the notion was to combine additional police forces, plus additional lighting, plus recreation programs for young people, etcetera. I think we found, in the course of the summer, in some places like here in Ingersoll, it works beautifully. In other places, I think it was less successful the first time around. But we also knew we were innovating a new approach, combining all these resources, so we knew it was a first step towards something much larger. Let me have Liz? Chief? Who wants to join in? Chief?

Chief James Secreto, NYPD Housing Bureau: Good morning. James Secreto, chief of housing. I just would like to say, before I get started, is that I am a product of public housing. I grew up in Albany Houses, about two miles from here. And it is kind of the basis for the person that I became, so I'd like to say that I'm going to – I want to try and make sure that kids have the possibility of being a police chief like I did, coming out of public housing – or the commissioner for that matter.

[Laughter]

Why stop at police chief? But you asked about the 15 developments? At the time we started the initiative back in July, there were – we were down, in those developments, 2.7 percent. We've doubled that crime reduction. It's now five and a half percent in those fifteen developments. Some have done very well. Ingersoll, as we spoke about, has done very well. Queensbridge – not Queensbridge – Stapleton has done very well. Patterson in the Bronx is down 34.5 percent. Stapleton in Staten Island is down 46 percent. Van Dyke in Brownsville is down 22 percent. Some not so good – Bushwick is up 40 percent and they have three shootings – five shootings versus zero for the year. So, the reviews are mixed but overall, crime is down 5.5 percent in those 15 developments. Some have struggled. 10 out of the 15 are down in crime and shootings – at the time of the initiative, we were up three shootings – ten percent. We're presently up one shooting – 15 versus 14.7 percent. So, I don't know if I've answered that question for you [inaudible].

Mayor: So I think, Courtney, to finish that point, you know, we're very pleased with what's been achieved so far. But again, this was year one. This is the kind of approach we expect to see a lot more of and we think it will achieve more as we deepen the strategy.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: Well, I never get caught up in the hype. I think it's very important — boy, if you ever want a lesson in staying focused on your goals and not getting lost in the day to day noise, just look at Commissioner Bratton. I think one of the many reasons for his success is that he stays laser focused on his strategic goals. We've known from the beginning where we wanted to go. And I knew from my experience working with police all over the city and working with community residents – I knew we weren't going back. I knew we were going forward. And I knew we had the right team to bring us forward. So, I never worried about some of those attempts to divide us, and they were attempts to divide us — I've spoken to that before. Some of it was very purposeful misinformation. I have tremendous respect, not just for this commissioner and this leadership team, but for all the men and woman of the NYPD, and they should be very proud today. I hope this is a day that every officer of this police force takes a moment to reflect on what they've achieved in less than a year. They have a lot to be proud of. But we, I think all along, have understood what our North Star was. You know, we need a city that is both safe and fair. We need to protect and respect. It's as simple as that. And I guarantee you, as every day New

Yorkers experience that change, it will lead to more and more support for the work of our police, meaning more and more citizens will offer information to the police. More and more citizens will see themselves as partners with the police. And I've said that – we've talked about this a lot last year. I think it was a real important point. One of the things I learned working with these professionals is intelligence gathering is a huge part of the path to success. And when you have community residents coming forward and saying, I know where a criminal is or I know where a gun is or I know where there's a problem brewing – I want to make sure you know before it happens. It makes a world of difference. We're building that framework where people can have that kind of positive dialogue with the officer on the beat in their neighborhood and that is going to be the beginning of a lot more change.

Question: On the body-cameras, can you clarify — are officers actually going to start wearing them this week? he commissioner said training will begin — what does that —

Mayor: Let me just say, we're going to have a lot more to say on body-cameras later in the week. A lot more detail – commissioner I don't know if there's anything you want to do just to frame it, the details to come?

Commissioner Bratton: The training for that process actually begins this week, starting tomorrow. And the cameras will be up and running in some of the target precincts by the weekend. As the mayor indicated, there'll be a press availability to see that training first-hand just before the officers go out in the field and answer your questions relative to the technology we're using, as well as the expansion capabilities of the system.

Question: The commissioner cited some controversial incidents as [inaudible]. I wonder how strongly you feel that foundation is as the Eric Garner grand jury decision approaches and their might be some backlash throughout the city?

Mayor: I think this commissioner has set the right tone and the right approach. And I think the NYPD, again, should be very proud of how it has managed the right to protest. We've seen some troubling situations around the country. But here, we've seen, I think, a very positive outcome where the NYPD respected the right of citizens to make their voices heard, was smart and creative and flexible in their approach, and kept order. And I think that will put us in a strong position for the days ahead. I think that, in the end, anybody who feels strongly on the issue knows the difference between when they're being given an opportunity to state their feelings versus when that opportunity is being deprived. And here in this city, there is a real respect for freedom of speech and the NYPD has been in the forefront of that.

Question: Commissioner, how would you describe the difference in Stop, Question, and Frisk a year ago to how the program's run now?

Commissioner Bratton: Well, quite clearly, there is a lot less of it. We had a couple hundred thousand incidents a year ago. This year, it will come in under 50,000. And as we've just reported, the crime numbers continue to go down. And ironically, if you look back to the peak – about 2010, 2011 – when there were about 700,000 and they began to fall, crime continued to fall. Although many were predicting Stop, Question, and Frisk went down, crime would go up – doesn't work that way. It's basically much more focused policing. The number of guns we're getting as a result of those fewer stops has increased – I forget, I think it was like 6 or 7 percent, it's up to around 15 or 16 percent now. So, it's much more focused and it's much more accurate as reflected in that we're getting a higher rate of gun seizures with the stops that we are doing.

Mayor: Just a quick follow on — what this commissioner said all along was we want to go after the bad guys. We don't want to go after innocent, law-abiding New Yorkers who just happen to be walking down the street. We want to focus our energies on the serious criminals and that's exactly what he and this police force are doing and that's why you are seeing this success.

Question: In regards to the protests that have been, very recently, related to Ferguson and other issues – the protesters have often taken to blocking streets, blocking traffic, stopping traffic, which could obviously sometimes impede an emergency vehicle or something like that. Is that something that you're going to be allowing protestors to do? Or will protestors who try to stop traffic be arrested — this has just been a recurring theme in some of these —

Mayor: I think there's a great sensitivity to making sure our emergency vehicles can get through and I think we've had a lot of success. I give the NYPD a lot of credit for, again, respecting the right to protest and managing that very, very well, while making sure that emergency vehicles can get around. We're going to be constantly aware of the need to balance those realities. Obviously at any point, if an obstruction creates a larger problem, the police have the option to arrest the protestors. They will be given due warning, and again I give the NYPD great credit for having been very, very communicative. When it gets to a point where people are on the verge of arrest, it's announced numerous times to give people a chance to reconsider their options. And you saw in these last weeks, at that point, a lot of protestors stepped back and chose not to be arrested and ended that form of protest. So I think there's been a very smart and agile response, but we're certainly not going to let any protest compromise our ability to get people the emergency help they need. Do you want to add?

Chief of Department James O'Neill: Hi, good morning. Chief O'Neill – Jimmy O'Neill. As far as getting emergency vehicles through, we do have a system in place for that. We have a joint operation center down at headquarters. So, if we see a demonstration that is going down one street, making a turn, we have real-time information getting back to the JOC. And we can notify the agencies involved to make sure their vehicles get through safely.

Question: Is there any concern of just general traffic being gridlocked by these protests?

Chief O'Neill: They've been pretty nimble. You know, we're not really sure what streets they're going to make a turn on but we have a mobile force that goes with them and as the mayor said, people have the right to protest and we're working with the groups to make sure it's done safely. And if there is a large intersection obstructed that we need to get it clear, you know, we'll take what appropriate action we need to take.

Question: This is a question for the commissioner. Yesterday protestors were arrested when they went into the streets seemed to be a little bit of a tougher crackdown than last week. What has changed in terms of the hands-off approach to last week?

Chief O'Neill: I don't think our approach has changed. If you look at the number of arrests we've had so far – I think the number is up to about 31 – and the protests have been going on since last Monday. So, it's not a large number of arrests. If we asked you to get out of the street, you should probably get out of the street. We need to get traffic and we need to get emergency vehicles through. We have to balance their rights with the rights of the other 8.5 million New Yorkers.

Question: We're referring [inaudible] of the FDR Drive was closed last week when the protestors were on there and yesterday they were arrested as soon as they stepped into the street.

Chief O'Neill: If you looked at the FDR and West Side Highway – look at the time of night that happened. It was late into the night.

Mayor: And I think, again, I want to thank Chief O'Neill. It's a very agile, intelligent approach. If people are protesting in a fashion that really doesn't create that much disruption, that's going to be one approach. But in the case, as you just indicated, where it might cause a lot of disruption in the middle of the day, or again, if there is an emergency vehicle that needs to get through, the police will act very strategically to address that. I think it's been actually, a very consistent approach. Marcia?

Question: As the city is poised at some point in the near future to get the verdict — the grand jury’s verdict on Eric Garner, I wonder what you would say to people in New York or people who are, as the commissioner said, maybe outside agitators who may want to protest no matter what the decision is — what your message to them would be? And also, you know, piggybacking on that question, if they seek to disrupt traffic the way they did the night of the Ferguson thing, what would be the policy?

Mayor: Sure, I think the answer is quite simple. People have a right to protest peacefully and we will respect that right. But if we think public safety is compromised, the police will act very assertively to address that problem. So I think it’s a common sense reality. I understand people have very strong feelings and I don’t — none of us know what the outcome will be. But people have strong feelings on these issues. I think my message is, we’re doing a lot to change the reality here in our city, to reform the approach our police take, and bring our communities and police closer together. But anyone who wants to protest any decision of a government has a right to that, and we’ll respect that right, but we also have to maintain order.

Question: Given the fact that all the success that you and the police department have had in, not only reducing crime numbers, but reducing stop and frisks, and reducing marijuana arrests, don’t you think — or would you say to people who would want to protest, hey we’ve made changes and we’re making more and so maybe there’s no reason to protest?

Mayor: Well, I don’t ever want to judge what people feel in terms of their reason to protest. But I want to get to the core of the matter of your question. I think what, all over this country, people need to feel is that their concerns are being heard and acted on. I think that’s a foundation of democracy. So, there was an election. People of this city wanted fewer arbitrary stops. They wanted a different and better relationship with the police. They wanted more fairness. They wanted to see fewer marijuana arrests. Those things are happening now. The very things that the people in this city demanded are happening. This police leadership is committed to those changes and they’re making them happen and to their great credit, they’re driving down crime at the same time. So, in some places, people understand that we may feel that their voices are not heard. In this city, the voices of the people are heard, and the changes are happening. And I respect everyone’s feelings and concerns but I also hope that people can see, with their own eyes, that changes are happening and more changes are coming.

Question: [Inaudible] reason to protest?

Mayor: Again, I don’t judge how anyone reacts to any particular incident. What I would say is, the underlying desire that many people have for change is being heard and acted upon. Yeah, let’s finish with [inaudible] so get some other folks in.

Question: [Inaudible]

Commissioner Bratton: It’s quite simple. The mayor indicated that people have a right to demonstrate, protest. If they engage in criminal activity, such as vandalism — actual crime — they will be arrested, quite simply. But we have the ability to have a level of tolerance — breathing room if you will. And we’ve been doing that these last eight, nine days. And this is a department that has a lot of experience dealing with various forms of demonstration. And we adjust our strategies and our tactics dependent on circumstances of the moment. And my compliments to Chief O’Neill, Chief Gomez, and the other chiefs and the officers themselves, who have had 31 — 31 arrests — 30 arrests — something like that. No major incidents. No vandalism. No crime committed during these offenses. So the city should actually feel quite proud of itself in that respect, that it’s been able to hold these demonstrations and get their point across and not cause major disruption or crime during the process.

Question: Commissioner, with the Eric Garner grand jury decision looming are you planning on having extra officers in anticipation of that? Are you prepared to handle any possible protests?

Commissioner Bratton: We, as you might expect, are planning accordingly. It is our anticipation that [inaudible] will go to the grand jury probably sometime this week. So in Staten Island yesterday, with some of the leadership assembled here — Vanessa Gibson and the advocate — we met with a number of the religious and community leaders that have been, since the Garner incident, working to ensure that Staten Island remains calm. They had a very large march that went on very peacefully. So, we're quite confident that the leadership over there working with the various community groups. Will they engage in some type of demonstration no matter which way the jury goes? Certainly. But I think that there will be an ability — that people will get to have their voices heard without disturbances. We, on the other hand, on the police side, will naturally gear up to deal with any potential contingency that might occur. And Chief O'Neill and Chief Gomez have been working with various [inaudible] commanders on just those types of plans.

Question: I just want to go back to stop and frisk for a moment. You mentioned there's a significant drop in stops this year — I was wondering if you could address the rate of minorities being stopped and the rate of innocents being stopped? Has that changed in past years? I know that was an issue as well [inaudible]

Mayor: Before I pass to the commissioner, I just want to state the obvious, that what the commissioner indicated earlier — you are getting fewer stops, and better stops, meaning much more of a focus on real criminals, not everyday law-abiding New Yorkers, and very effective stops in terms of what outcomes they lead to.

Commissioner Bratton: The overall percentage of those being stopped, in terms of race or ethnicity, has not changed dramatically, only by a couple of percentage points.

Question: [Inaudible] some people characterize the number of people being stopped were innocent. Do you have stats on that?

Commissioner Bratton: I'm sorry, what was the question?

Question: I know in the past the PD has characterized the number of people being stopped [inaudible] do you have any —

Commissioner Bratton: No, I referenced that figure, indicating that 16 percent of those stops have resulted in an arrest, usually for a weapon possession. So, in other words, the officer who makes a stop has to have reasonable suspicion, and previous to this year, about 6 — I think maybe it was 6 or 7 percent of stops — resulted in an arrest for some type of offense. That percentage — I think the last time I looked — was around 16 or 17 percent. So, fewer stops, but more of the stops resulting in the arrest for a criminal offense.

Question: We've got a 23-year trend now of decreasing crime and I'm wondering if there's anybody here from Ingersoll, or perhaps the public advocate, or the borough president, who might have a different point of view as to what has caused the decrease in crime. Is it solely the actions of the police, or is something else happening in society that's causing this general trend?

Public Advocate Letitia James: So, I don't want to take away from the good work of the department under the leadership of Police Commissioner Bratton. But I can tell you that as someone who has represented Ingersoll public housing for 10 years, I do know that poverty — and the fact that there was not a connection between all the economic development that you are witnessing in downtown Brooklyn, there was no evidence of that — as most of you recall, in my inauguration speech, I particularly referred to these public housing. And now, under the leadership of Mayor de Blasio, he is working again to tie the residents of public housing to all the economic development that is happening in downtown Brooklyn — through workforce development, through training, through employment centers, both in downtown Brooklyn as well as in the Navy Yard. So, it's economic development, as well as the presence of police officers, as well as — again — establishing trust in this community. And lastly, I cannot — I would be remiss if I did not mention, and again, give another shoutout to Tameeka, who

is here, who has been a wonderful – an inspiration to the residents here in public housing, who manages this site as well as manages the garden that you will see when you exit this facility, as well as a number of other initiatives that she has sponsored throughout the public housing, and I want to thank her for all of that.

Mayor: Before the borough president comes up, I'd just like Tameeka to come up and join us so she can get her accolades, so where ever she is – find her, bring her up. Go ahead.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams: And the Tameekas throughout the city. And I think that at the heart of it is also our stop and frisk policy. We had a policy previously that was focused on stopping black guys and not bad guys. And now the policy is really focusing, using a successful tool of stop and frisk. And as the public advocate stated, as the councilwoman of this area – I patrolled this area. I walked this – these public housing. I saw the spirit and the energy of the people who felt they were being not only disrespecting by the police officers in blue uniforms, but by the bad guys in blue jeans. And once we allowed them to know they can use these facilities in a very safe manner, their energy changed. When they were treated in a respectful manner, their energy actually changed. And so, I don't think we could really understand how important it is, that because you are in public housing does not mean you want to receive the dignity and respect that you deserve. And when they see a Chief Secreto, a child of public housing, rise up through the ranks and become a three-star chief, it sends a message that we have turned the corner on how we are going to treat all the residents of this city. And when I walk through now as borough president, and visit a facility like this, and talk to the seniors who sit on the bench and they feel safe, and talk to the young people who are able to now be on the basketball court and not focus on crime – that is the energy that is needed, with the employment that's coming to the area, with the economic development and the job training. So, there is a combination – we had a toxic soup of ingredients that created criminal behavior – has dissipated, and we have the mayor that understands it's not only about policing, it's about giving people the possibility of a great future, and that is how we're going to turn around crime.

Mayor: Since Tameeka Ford's been talked about so much, I wanted you to meet the actual Tameeka Ford, and hear for a quick moment from her about what the efforts here at Ingersoll have meant, in the ability to reach young people and turn around crime. And we're giving you a step up, Tameeka.

Tameeka Ford: Good afternoon.

Mayor: Towering Tameeka Ford. [Laughs]

Tameeka Ford: I would like to thank Mayor de Blasio, and our Council Member Laurie Cumbo as well as our former council member, Public Advocate Letitia James, for allowing University Settlement and myself to be a part of this community in Fort Greene. We have done some amazing things here, but we were able to do really more amazing things this year with the mayor's expansion this summer, and we were able to open our doors later, we were able to serve a greater population of young people that we normally don't see, we were able to create a safe place for, particularly, young African-American males to be in a space, safely, and to – [inaudible] – and to 12 am. And together, with community members, with our tenant association, with partners – business partners – we were able to create a sense of community, where everyone felt connected, and they felt like this was a place where they can come, they can learn, they can grow. We had job opportunities presented through the Navy Yard. We had different opportunities presented to all our partners on Myrtle Avenue, and also through our partnerships with NYCHA. We're so grateful to be here – University Settlement, the entire team – to be able to be impactful in this community, but also to be members of this community. I am a native of Brooklyn. I'm from Bedford-Stuyvesant, but Fort Greene has really become my home, my place where I learn and grow, and people have welcomed me into their community, so we're committed to be here to serve and to make a difference, and to address the needs. Our doors are always open, and again, we are thankful to Mayor de Blasio for the opportunity he provided us this summer to keep the doors open a little later.

Mayor: Thank you. Well done.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: [Inaudible] questions. We're doing our damndest, Henry.

Question: I don't know how long you've [inaudible] but it's really a significant thing [inaudible] what has caused this trend? I understand the police have done a wonderful job, but is there something else going on here inside the community that has reduced crime and violence this extent [inaudible]?

Tameeka Ford: University Settlement has – we've been here for five years. And the amazing thing that happened that has reduced crime is that we built a sense of belonging and connectedness, a community, which includes our precinct – the 88 Precinct. They work very closely with us, as well as our housing police PSA-3. And so the expansion with the mayor this summer allowed for all different entities to come together and work together, and it was amazing to see the officers who were assigned to be here with the young people to work with them, to go in the fitness room and talk with them, to talk to them about their job – and so, when there was a sense of separation, this summer we were able to build connectedness, and the issues of trust were kind of put aside, and we were able to really grow together. And so, when the kids are leaving the center at 12 am and they're walking home, instead of feeling as if the police were going to harass them, they knew who Officer [inaudible] was, and so there wasn't a sense of contention – it was more of a sense of, hello, we're all in this community together. And so, we're pretty excited about that.

Mayor: Yeah, just before – Laurie Cumbo wants to add. Our council member from this community.

Council Member Laurie Cumbo: Hi, just want to add that in addition to that, a lot of the things that we saw here was that there's a real community effort. There are organizations such as Kids in the Crossfire, that did a lot of programming over the summer. We had an opportunity to have a basketball tournament that was held every weekend here in order to bring the communities together. One of the things that I joked about was I asked, where are all these young people coming from, and they would say, they're coming from Walt Whitman, they're coming from Farragut, they're coming from the Oro. And I was like, which development is the Oro? They're like, that's the new development that was just built, one of the luxury condominiums. So, there were younger people that were coming here from all over to participate in those programs. We also had organizations such as Afropunk – did somewhat of an indoor block party. We had rollerskating that was going on. An organization that I founded called MoCADA did a film festival here. There are mural programs going on at Walt Whitman. There are – the gardeners, as were mentioned, were listed as the number one gardeners in the city of New York. So, this was really a concerted effort. We were playing spades here until midnight. I mean, there were a lot of efforts that the elected officials, our spiritual leaders came together – our police captains – we did Fathers Take Your Children to School day, we did turkey days – you know, just on the turkey day, I ran short, and I called the 88 Police Precinct, and I called PSA-3, and I said I need more turkeys – I called our borough president – and instantly they came up with 100 additional turkeys to give out for an event that went all the way down about six blocks. So, it's really a community effort, and it has everything to do with our spiritual leaders, our cultural institutions. When I fall short, I also call on our developers, to say that we need some things, and we need some opportunities in the area, so it's really an opportunity to bring everyone together.

Mayor: Just – thank you. One last comment on Henry's question, and then we'll take a couple more on this topic, and then we'll go to off topic. Henry, look, you're asking a truly foundational question, and I'm not a criminologist, but I'll say something that I think is worthy of note – whatever other societal trends may be going on, you know, there is something that happened here in the city, which was two decades plus of very focused work. You're right, it started with Mayor Dinkins, and the increase in the number of officers. I think the pivot point was when Commissioner Bratton became commissioner the first time, and created CompStat with Jack Maple and others, and that changed the whole approach, and really brought forward a generation of police leaders – many of whom are standing here today, in roles of ultimate importance – a lot of these are disciples of the CompStat era – the beginning of that movement towards a different kind of policing and a different kind of

connection between police and community. And I think it's very important to recognize that two decades plus of continuous progress – notwithstanding some policies that I didn't agree with, a lot of other people didn't agree with along the way – but you still have to appreciate the arc of continuous progress, across different mayors, different commissioners. I think no one was more foundational than Commissioner Bratton in terms of bringing the pieces together. But something has happened here that's created a sustained momentum. What's so interesting is we get to 2014, and the question you heard earlier – was it suddenly going to turn in a different direction because we moved away from the overuse of stop and frisk, because we refocused our energies on engaging the community because we wanted to move away from marijuana arrests – was this suddenly going to disrupt that progress? I had confidence all along that this progress was strong, the momentum was real, but there was another stage of evolution that had to occur. And with Commissioner Bratton's leadership, you actually see another chapter now being written, actually going farther than was reached before. So, I think the one thing we can speak to is what the NYPD has done, and what community leaders, elected officials have done in unison with the NYPD, to get us here. I'm sure there are some other things going on too, but I think the big and consistent story is a plan and a vision that was put together over two decades ago that actually worked.

Question: For the commissioner – do you stand by your comments to the council in September that you think the NYPD needs an additional 1,000 police officers, and to the mayor, are you considering what your commissioner said [inaudible] elected officials standing by [inaudible]

Commissioner Bratton: What we talked about back then was the idea that we had a reengineering process, which was effectively a auditing process, underway. That process is coming to conclusion. We will have a plan of action after the first of the year coming up, which will be the, basically the road map, if you will, as to where we would like to go, where we think we can go. As to the budgetary impact of that, I'll be discussing that with the mayor after the first of the year, in terms of what we think we can do with what we have, what we think we could do if we had more, and then that'll be taken into his considerations, certainly, as he moves his budget to the City Council.

Question: And the officers?

Commissioner Bratton: I'll talk to the mayor about that, and we'll let you know.

Mayor: And there will be a budget process for all agencies, and obviously the NYPD has come forward with some very important needs in the course of this year, and we've done everything possible to meet those needs, and those resources have been used very, very well, and to good effect. But for the future, we go into, now, a full budget process, with all of the checks and balances that are necessary in the budget process. Obviously, the City Council will be deeply involved. So, we're about to start that phase in January.

Question: There have been 2,200 more arrests for index crimes in the past 11 months, and I'm wondering if the decline in the overall number of reported crime – does that mean that you're solving more of these crimes? Can you talk about the clearance rate of robberies and of homicides?

Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce, NYPD: Good morning. We are doing better investigations and technology has fueled that quite a bit. So, the concentration is on the index crimes, the seven majors, and we've done quite well putting together patterns, identifying patterns and making arrests on that. Right now our homicide clearance rate is as high as – that I've seen – we've got in several years, and that's at 77 percent. So we're doing very well. A lot of that is hard work of men and women of the detective bureau who went out in the streets to work on these crimes. I was honored to be a lieutenant in the [inaudible] precinct in the mid-90s, and I see the change here now as well. Concentration of technology, more focused on real index crime has helped bring down that number.

Question: [Inaudible]

Chief Boyce: I don't have that with me. Thanks.

Mayor: We'll get that to you. We'll get that to you. Last call? Last one.

Question: When it comes to police officers facing indictment do you feel that prosecutors are predisposed to favor the police, whether consciously or unconsciously, given their close working relationship with the police? Generally speaking, do you think are predisposed to steer things in favor of police and is this a concern with the upcoming decision on the Garner case?

Mayor: I think every prosecutor is an individual. And I think it's important, while we're addressing bigger issues in our society – and I spoke to this yesterday – we are addressing, in this moment in our history, something that has not just been decades in the making, but centuries in the making – the history of centuries of racism that has to be addressed head on. In this city, I believe we are taking some of the necessary steps to actually address this tale of two cities. You know, a lot of times we've talked about the tale of two cities in terms of income inequality, but it equally can be applied to the – what still is a persistent racial divide that has to be addressed. And it will be addressed by better educational efforts and it will be addressed by getting people good quality jobs and affordable housing. It will also be addressed by reforming the relationship between police and community and, again, I believe the evidence presented here today says in New York City we are taking this issue head on. I think Commissioner Bratton and his team are addressing that history every day to their actions. So that's the overall dynamic, but if you say to me is every prosecutor the same? No, I think each prosecutor is different, I think each case is different, and each one should be judged on the merits. And I have a core respect for my colleagues in government to believe that will judge each case on the merits. Okay, off-topic? Go ahead.

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: So, first of all, we are aware of the specific allegations made by this parent. We take them seriously, we are not yet in a position to confirm whether they are accurate or not, but we take them very seriously. In fact, our inspectors will be at that sight today. We've — as I think you remember when we started on the road to this Pre-K program — we put an unprecedented number of inspectors on the case — fire department inspectors, health department, buildings department. They have been in ready supply. So, any place we needed inspected we have been able to get personnel there quickly, and there has been a regular re-inspection program to make sure that we are satisfied. I want to also note that in the beginning of the process, you remember months ago when we first put out the call for different community organizations to become a part of the pre-k program, we actually had a huge surplus in terms of seats that were available to programs that wanted to participate. And we said very clearly, both on a quality level in terms of education, and on a health and safety level, if we do not think that the program measured up we simply didn't select them. I think since then the track record has been very strong for the programs now serving over 53,000 kids, but whenever we hear of an allegation, we send inspectors right away and inspectors are certainly available to be deployed immediately.

Question: Can you talk about what you plan to do — right now, most of the City Council says they're undecided or don't want to pass the horse carriage bill. Can you talk about what you plan to do to actually make sure this is passed?

Mayor: Well, it's going be a legislative process like any other. The details of the bill come out in a few days. We'll begin the process of talking through with council members — why we think it's important for the future of the city to do this right, and also engaging our public dialogue. So I have a lot of confidence that the common sense will win the day here, that it just doesn't make sense to have horses in the middle of the streets of the busiest city in the country and that we can find a productive way forward.

Question: Your administration is unveiling its reforms at Rikers Island — many of these changes aren't set to go into effect for six months to a year. So I was wondering, how long do you think it will take to show — results become evident? And what sort of measures do you check those results in [inaudible]

Mayor: I'll start and if Liz Glazer wants to add she can jump in. You'll remember, a lot of you were there when Commissioner Ponte and I talked about the changes being made, and some of those have actually already born fruit, and I give Commissioner Ponte tremendous credit. He went into a very troubled situation — he had to rebuild a leadership structure, he had to institute a series of reforms, and we've been trying to add to those reforms regularly. So, the announcements related to mental health that we're talking about today are an additional step on top of a number of other changes that have already been made and I think you are going to hear a steady stream of reforms and changes being made at Rikers Island. Obviously, they've announced for example, full security camera coverage for all areas in Rikers Island that need it to help create accountability, but there is clearly some progress already. Commissioner Ponte went over those details — we'll get them to you again — about some of the reduction of violence that we're starting to see and some of the improved operations. This is going to be a long process by definition, because it was not years, it was decades in the making. That's how broken our corrections system was. But I think I can safely say some real tangible progress is already occurring and a lot more will happen going into next year.

Question: Another horse carriage question — when you talk to members of the council and some business groups, they talk about the industry as something having a positive effect on tourism and I noticed that in the proposals that we've talked about so far, there's been no mention of those electric cars that could replace the carriage horses, which could then continue this as a tourist attraction as part of New York City. I wonder why that you decided —

Mayor: Well the formal proposal isn't out, and we're certainly looking at a variety of options. I think the electric cars are one of the good ideas that could provide a positive alternative. I want to see the people doing the work now have ongoing work, either in the tourist industry around Central Park or in something related to horses, and I think we'll be able to do that. But, on the question of tourism — just a common sense point I made this all last year, so you can go back and find quotes to this effect. It is a matter of common sense that people do not travel from all over the country, all over the world, to come to New York City just to take a horse carriage ride. They do come for Broadway, they do come for the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty, and our cuisine, but I am absolutely convinced that the first thing on people's list is not a horse carriage ride. And our tourism industry is — to the credit of NYC & Company and so many other great folks in the industry — is booming, getting stronger all the time. The absence of horse carriages is not going to change the success of our tourism industry.

Question: Having those electric cars really is not necessary?

Mayor: No, I did not say that. I think I said, quite clearly, I'm interested and I think its going to be a great option.

Question: Just following up on that, how personally involved do you plan to be in persuading the council members to your view and do you expect there a lot of [inaudible]

Mayor: A lot of what?

[Laughter]

Question: [Inaudible]

Mayor: You know, Phil always encourages me to be open and transparent, but this may one of those times I want to say I don't want to dignify that question with an answer. Very clever, very clever. I am going to be —

anytime we put forward a policy proposal I get involved, and I certainly intend to talk to council members about it, and I think we're going to have a lot of support from the council.

Phil: One more, guys.

Question: On a pre-k story that came out today, would you — if your children were in this program, would you yank them out immediately? Would you — I mean, how would you feel if your kids were in a program —

Mayor: On these specific allegations? Again they are allegations from one parent. I don't take that lightly, I am a parent myself, but until we have some evidence from our own inspections I am not going to assume that we know all of the facts. What I'd say as someone who had to kids in full day pre-k and, again, it had a profound impact on Chiara and Dante's lives, anytime you sense that there may be a problem you address it to the head of the program — the principal or the head of the school — and you find out what's going on. I don't think most parents would immediately assume the worst. I think you go find out what's going on. If you don't like what you're hearing, yeah sure you might pull your kid back for a while, but I think in the end the vast majority of parents want their kids to learn, depend on the pre-k program in terms of their life and their schedule, and parents are eagle-eyed about the safety of their kids but I think are also smart about getting the facts before they judge.

Question: Mr. Mayor, have you and Chirlane ever taken a horse-carriage ride? And can you expand on do some people actually enjoy that? Or do you think it's kind of goofy to be at that end of the horse?

Mayor: Chirlane and I have never taken a horse carriage ride together. I believe in my childhood I did once, but I have to tell you the memory is kind of fuzzy — it's been a long life. I understand, I have talked about this very openly. When first I heard these proposals from the advocates who believed we should ban horse carriages, I was dubious. I thought it was part of New York and we should keep it because its traditional. And, to their credit, a lot of them talked to me over time and said, do you keep something traditional if it is immoral? Well, obviously the answer is no. This is not an environment for horses, it just isn't. It's the middle of the busiest street in the country, it's city streets, it's pavement, it's cars honking and darting in and out, it just doesn't make sense. So, I understand people who may like to take horse carriage rides, I just don't think this is the place for them.

Okay thanks, everyone.

###