

## **\$800 Million To Be Spent Downtown**

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Gov. George E. Pataki and Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced \$800 million worth of projects for Lower Manhattan yesterday, including cobblestone streets around the New York Stock Exchange, a new elementary school on Beekman Street and improvements in Chinatown.

Many of the projects are intended to bring further life to a neighborhood still recovering from the Sept. 11 attack, after a protracted period of wrangling over how the money should be spent. But they are also dear to the heart of Sheldon Silver, the State Assembly speaker, who represents the area and has been pushing for more government money and attention downtown. Next week, he will be a crucial voice in the debate over the proposed West Side stadium.

Spending the \$800 million, the last of the federal dollars given to the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation after the attack, represents a crucial turning point in the stymied rebuilding process as it moves from planning to construction.

Specifically, it crystallizes the vision of the city and the state that Lower Manhattan will be as much a residential neighborhood as a commercial center.

There is \$20 million earmarked for parks and playgrounds, \$70 million to rejuvenate the TriBeCa section of Hudson River Park and \$7 million for a local development corporation in Chinatown to improve sanitation, among other things.

"The proposal the governor and our administration will present to L.M.D.C.'s board next month will help ensure that communities in Lower Manhattan remain great places to work, visit and live for people in all income levels," Mr. Bloomberg said.

But the spending list was also the bluntest example yet of the link between the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan and the fate of the stadium on the Far West Side of Manhattan, where Mr. Silver holds a key vote. The state Public Authorities Control Board, on which Mr. Silver controls the Assembly's vote, could take up the stadium question as early as next week, and in the days leading up to the vote, stadium supporters have made an all-out effort to win over Mr. Silver and demonstrate popular backing for the project.

In one demonstration, a majority of the City Council yesterday signed a letter encouraging him and the leader of the State Senate, Joseph L. Bruno, to give the stadium their blessing. The 28 council members specifically backed the mayor's plan to spend \$300 million in city money on the project, which will make it difficult for Council Speaker Gifford Miller, a stadium opponent, to block the spending.

The letter was a blow to Mr. Miller, who has used his opposition to the stadium as the cornerstone of his mayoral campaign. But he said he was unfazed.

"When they actually have to vote to take \$300 million out of schools, senior centers and subways in their district and put it toward a football team," he said, "I know they'll vote in favor of their constituents and against the stadium."

Two stadium supporters and one member of Mr. Bruno's staff said Mr. Bruno received a call last week from Andrew H. Card Jr., the White House chief of staff, urging him to support the stadium. But Mr. Bruno did not seem to have budged from his ambivalence, saying yesterday that he still had many questions about the project.

Mr. Silver also declined to change his public position of serious doubt about the wisdom of the stadium, even after yesterday's announcement about the downtown projects. He said he did not regard the announcement as having anything to do with proposals he unveiled last week for revitalizing commercial life downtown using tax credits and incentives for moving jobs to Lower Manhattan.

In many ways, yesterday's announcement about the downtown projects mirrored a speech Mr. Bloomberg gave in 2002, in which he outlined a vision that gave minimal attention to the 16-acre site where the attack occurred and focused instead on the revitalization of the waterfront and the building of schools, libraries and movie theaters.

But much of the spending in the plan was alluded to earlier this month by Mr. Pataki, who has been battered with criticism all spring about the lack of progress downtown and the indecision that had surrounded spending the \$800 million.

"We had been very critical of a lot of the way the money was being allocated before," said David D. Kallick, a senior fellow at the Fiscal Policy Institute, who said he was pleased to see the money spread around the area. "A lot of the rebuilding has been focused on office development and the impact on high-end business and not really focused on what is the effect on Chinatown and the Lower East Side."

Mr. Silver has also long pressed for investments in Chinatown and the Lower East Side and for incentives to draw more businesses downtown, and both the governor and the mayor have spent the last year looking for ways to please the speaker.

The greatest measure of Lower Manhattan's future as a vibrant commercial center revolves around Goldman Sachs and the government's efforts to woo the company back downtown.

In a conversation yesterday with editors and reporters of The New York Times, Mayor Bloomberg said that while he hoped Lower Manhattan's redevelopment would include Goldman Sachs, it was not essential to him that the company revive its plans for a headquarters across the street from the trade center site.

"Arguably, somebody else will come along and build on that site," he said. "You could put a residential building on that site right away." While the mayor conceded that Goldman could not be easily emulated as a symbolic powerhouse, he added, "downtown would survive. Let's get serious."