



LOWER MANHATTAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Partial Action Plan No. 5 for Tourism and Communications

Overview

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) has prepared the following Partial Action Plan with regards to the \$2 billion federal appropriation for the World Trade Center disaster recovery and rebuilding efforts administered by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). LMDC is also receiving funding from an additional \$783 million federal appropriation to HUD for damaged properties and businesses (including the restoration of utility infrastructure) as well as economic revitalization related to the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center. This plan details the proposed expenditure of \$2,421,052.63 out of the \$2 billion to fund the following items:

1. Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program totaling up to \$1,000,000.00.
2. Lower Manhattan Information Program totaling up to \$1,300,000.00.
3. Planning and administration activities totaling up to \$121,052.63.

To date, HUD has approved six Partial Action Plans allocating approximately \$1.62 billion to LMDC from the total \$2.78 billion allocation. On June 7, 2002, HUD approved the Partial Action Plan calling for the expenditure of approximately \$306 million for the Residential Grant Program, the Employment Training Assistance Program, the Interim Memorial Program, and Administration and Planning. This Partial Action Plan was amended on September 25, 2002. On November 22, 2002, HUD approved the Partial Action Plan for Business Recovery and Economic Revitalization calling for the expenditure of an additional \$350 million for the WTC Business Recovery Grant Program, the Small Firm Attraction and Retention Grant Program, and the Job Creation and Retention Program. On June 14, 2003, HUD approved the Partial Action Plan calling for the expenditure of approximately \$24 million for Cultural and Community Development. On August 6, 2003, HUD approved the Partial Action Plan calling for the expenditure of approximately \$156 million for Short-Term Capital Projects, Long-Term Planning, and Supplemental Funds for Business Recovery. On September 15, 2003, HUD approved the Partial Action Plan calling for the expenditure of approximately \$33 million for a program to assist New York firms suffering disproportionate loss of workforce as a result of the attacks on September 11, 2001. On September 15, 2003, HUD also approved the Partial Action Plan calling for the expenditure of \$750 million to restore and rebuild utility infrastructure in Lower Manhattan. Versions of these Plans with public comments and responses thereto are available on the LMDC web site: www.RenewNYC.com. Future partial action plans will detail

the projected expenditure of the remainder of funds available from the \$2 billion appropriation and will be subject to a public comment period with later submission to HUD.

This Partial Action Plan proposes the allocation of \$2,421,052.63 out of the remaining \$1.16 billion for a Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program, the Lower Manhattan Information Program, and Planning and Administration. The Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program will stimulate regional, national, and international tourism to Chinatown. The Lower Manhattan Information Program will provide people who live in, work in, and visit Lower Manhattan with a single source for essential news and information about the area and its recovery.

Partial Action Plan Activities	Allocation from \$2 billion
Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program	\$1,000,000.00
Lower Manhattan Information Program	\$1,300,000.00
Planning and Administration	\$121,052.63
Total	\$2,421,052.63

Any change greater than 5% in the funding committed to a certain activity, the addition or deletion of any activity, or change in the designated beneficiaries of an activity constitutes a substantial amendment and such amendment will be available for public review and approval by HUD.

National Objective

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation is a subsidiary of the New York State Urban Development Corporation d/b/a Empire State Development created in December 2001 to oversee the rebuilding and revitalization of Lower Manhattan. The activities contained in this Partial Action Plan have been designed to meet community and development needs resulting from the September 11th World Trade Center disaster. These activities have particular urgency because LMDC has determined that existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the City of New York and the individual residents of the City and other financial resources are not available to meet such needs. These activities provide assistance for properties and businesses damaged by, and for economic revitalization related to, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York City. The geographic areas of focus of this and future partial action plans are located in Manhattan, south of Houston Street. Programs included in this Partial Action Plan also meet the national objective of benefiting low and moderate income persons and communities.

Public Comment to the Partial Action Plan

This Partial Action Plan allocates funds to two information, tourism, and marketing initiatives, and to planning and administration.

This Partial Action Plan was made available to the public for public comment from September 18, 2003 to October 3, 2003. Comments were accepted by posted mail and electronic mail. The Partial Action Plan Draft for Public Comment was translated into Chinese and Spanish. LMDC placed advertisements inviting public comment on the draft plan in major New York City English, Spanish, and Chinese-language daily newspapers and weekly community newspapers serving Lower Manhattan. In addition, the text of the draft plan was made available on LMDC's web site (www.RenewNYC.com).

LMDC delivered copies of Partial Action Plan 5 in English, Spanish, and Chinese to over 25 civic and neighborhood-based organizations throughout Lower Manhattan, including locations in Chinatown and the Lower East Side such as Chinatown Manpower Project, Asian Americans for Equality, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Lower East Side Business Improvement District, Educational Alliance, Community Boards 1, 2, and 3, and several local library branches. LMDC also sent the documents electronically in three languages to nearly 200 LMDC Advisory Council members, representing a broad array of stakeholders including residents, small business owners, and neighborhood organizations, in addition to 12 other organizations, such as Henry Street Settlement, University Settlement, and others. Copies of the Partial Action Plan were also hand-delivered to the offices of every state, city, and federal elected official who represents all or part of Lower Manhattan south of Houston Street.

LMDC received comments relating to Partial Action Plan 5 from 24 groups and individuals, including 1 public official, 13 civic/educational organizations, 2 Lower Manhattan business owners, 3 residents of New York City outside of Lower Manhattan, 4 residents of Lower Manhattan, and 1 business owner in New York City outside of Lower Manhattan.

The responses to comments received during the comment period have been incorporated into this Partial Action Plan Submitted to HUD and are reviewed in Section IV.

I. Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program

LMDC proposes to allocate \$1 million to conduct a creative, effective, and cost-efficient tourism and marketing initiative to both stimulate regional, national, and international tourism to Chinatown – a Lower Manhattan community in which tourism is a major economic driver, and to encourage changes in the Chinatown community as a whole that would promote tourism. The September 11th Fund, which has agreed to jointly and equally sponsor this initiative, will contribute up to \$1 million of the total project cost of \$2 million.

The September 11th Fund was established the day of the terrorist attacks by the New York Community Trust and United Way of New York City to meet the immediate and long-term needs of victims, families, and communities affected by the tragic events of September 11th. The September 11th Fund makes grants to nonprofit organizations and agencies with the expertise to meet a wide range of needs. The Fund supports organizations and agencies that provide cash assistance, legal counseling, mental health services, job training and placement, and other services for victims, families, and others directly affected. It also makes grants to assist nonprofits and small businesses as they help communities rebuild.

The Chinatown Tourism and Marketing campaign results from LMDC's significant outreach within the Chinatown Community. Most recently, LMDC conducted seven Neighborhood Workshops, two of which focused on Chinatown. The first Chinatown specific workshop brought together recognized Chinatown business and civic organization leaders. After a joint New York City-LMDC presentation on the status and future of recovery efforts, which acknowledged the numerous studies made and reports published about the conditions in Chinatown resulting from the September 11th attacks, participants engaged in small group discussions focusing on what they saw as the key issues affecting Chinatown's recovery and their proposed solutions to perceived problems. Approximately three weeks later, the LMDC convened an additional workshop, focusing on Chinatown and the Lower East Side. The participants in both workshops emphasized the need to boost tourism and tourism associated spending in Chinatown. Participants proposed more than twenty tourism related projects.

The lack of a comprehensive tourism and marketing campaign threatens the economic recovery of Chinatown and its inhabitants. Tourism is a major economic driver and was severely impacted by the September 11th attacks. In a November 2002 comprehensive report, *Chinatown One Year After September 11th: An Economic Impact Study*, the Asian American Federation of New York noted that, "For nearly half of the restaurants and 60% of the jewelry stores surveyed, revenue generated from tourists was on average 40% lower this summer (summer of 2002) as compared with summer 2001." The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in Asia further exacerbated Chinatown's economic downturn. To help revitalize all of Lower Manhattan, the Asian American Federation Report and the Rebuild Chinatown Initiative's November 2002 report, *The Community Speaks One Year After September 11, 2001*, call for initiatives to boost tourism – a call supported by Senator Clinton, area residents, civic leaders, and community organizations.

Building upon the plethora of post September 11th studies and reports on conditions in Chinatown, the joint LMDC and September 11th Fund tourism and marketing campaign offers a unique opportunity to implement many of the proposed elements in a single, comprehensive, and cohesive initiative, which will enable the LMDC and the September 11th Fund to maximize the

effectiveness and cost efficiency of the overall campaign - thus accelerating the revitalization of Lower Manhattan's Chinatown.

LMDC and the September 11th Fund have structured the campaign to capitalize on public participation and input at the community organization level. LMDC and the September 11th Fund will select one or more consultant teams that will include at least one Chinatown based community organization and one or more firms with a proven record of experience and achievement in tourism development, as well as large scale outreach initiatives. The selected team(s) will assist LMDC and the September 11th Fund to develop the framework for, and then implement, a sustainable tourism and marketing campaign. The selection of the team(s) is the subject of a pending Request for Proposals (RFP), available on the LMDC website (www.RenewNYC.com), which seeks services to:

1. Identify existing short and long term factors impairing or impeding tourism in Chinatown;
2. Propose solutions to both real and perceived challenges to attracting more visitors to the Chinatown area;
3. Develop new, innovative, and effective ways to attract visitors to Chinatown, including New York City residents and workers, domestic and international tourists, and business travelers;
4. Identify current tourism and marketing initiatives and methods to improve upon them; and
5. Enhance the Chinatown community's ability to support tourism through technical assistance to businesses and tourism infrastructure.

The tourism and marketing campaign will commence after selection of the team(s), through LMDC's RFP process, by LMDC and the September 11th Fund and the incorporation of public comment received in response to this partial action plan. Criteria for selecting the team(s) will include, but not be limited to:

1. Approaches in methodology with respect to the anticipated scope of services that demonstrate maximum comprehension of the community and the ability to provide such services to LMDC and the September 11th Fund;
2. Experience of firm(s) and employees to be assigned to the project in general, and in particular, experience both with the Lower Manhattan Chinatown community, if any, and with providing large scale tourism and marketing initiatives to municipalities, economic development organizations, governmental entities, or other Chinatown communities;
3. Innovative or outstanding work by the team that demonstrates unique qualifications to provide tourism and marketing services for the Lower Manhattan Chinatown community;
4. Ability to establish rapport and confidence with the Chinatown community; and
5. Projected cost of services.

LMDC and the September 11th Fund are not seeking approaches that are one-time event driven, but rather, comprehensive efforts that propose projects, programs, and community participation that will help sustain a steady flow of tourists and NYC residents and workers to Chinatown. The implementation timeframe will depend upon a variety of factors including complexity of proposed solutions and duration of the project.

This project will benefit businesses, workers, residents, and visitors in Lower Manhattan, specifically the Chinatown area. As noted in the Asian American Federation Report, data from Census 2000 showed that in 1999, 31.4% of Asian families in Chinatown had an income below the official poverty level. Census 2000 data further shows that in Lower Manhattan's Chinatown, which includes the zip codes 10002 and 10038, over 60% of the households earn less than 80% of New York City's median income.

The estimated cost included in this partial action plan for this project is up to \$1,000,000.00.

The total project cost is approximately \$2,000,000.00. Other resources are expected to be available for this project to address the needs outlined in this plan. These other expected resources will include \$1,000,000.00 in funds from the September 11th Fund.

This program is eligible for HUD funding to be used to aid the travel and tourism industry in New York City as allowed and required by the Defense Appropriations Act of 2002, Public Law 107-117.

The total estimated cost for the Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program is up to \$1,000,000.00.

II. Lower Manhattan Information Program

LMDC proposes to allocate \$1.3 million to an existing public information campaign, the Lower Manhattan Public Information Campaign, currently in place at www.LowerManhattan.info. LowerManhattan.info provides people who live in, work in, and visit Lower Manhattan with a single source for essential news and information about the area and its recovery. It is led by the City of New York in partnership with LMDC, New York State, and the Federal Government in conjunction with partner agencies and organizations at the local, state, and federal level. The total estimated cost for the Lower Manhattan Information Program is up to \$1,300,000.00.

By funding an existing and effective information campaign, LMDC maximizes the use of its funds by avoiding substantial start-up costs.

The Lower Manhattan Public Information Campaign was created in response to a significant demand for a credible, “one-stop” source of information regarding Lower Manhattan’s recovery from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In the months following the attacks, information about the area’s recovery was widely available; however, many of Lower Manhattan’s residents and workers did not feel that it was reliable. Moreover, there was no one place to which people could turn for a comprehensive overview of the information that could be found. As efforts shifted from short-term emergency response to long-term recovery and redevelopment of Lower Manhattan, it became evident that the process ahead would be quite a challenge. In the months following September 11th, Lower Manhattan was reeling economically. Residents were moving away, commercial vacancies were high and rising, and though many visitors came to pay homage at the World Trade Center site, few stayed in the neighborhood to sightsee, shop, or eat. Restoring a sense of public confidence in the area and its future became imperative. One important first step was to create a coherent communications strategy to disseminate information about Lower Manhattan’s progress in a timely fashion, one that would complement the extensive revitalization efforts of the City and State. The area’s businesses, residents, and visitors needed access to information – on a regular basis and in a consistent manner – about the many aspects of Lower Manhattan’s recovery. The source of this information had to be credible, comprehensive, and customer-friendly.

The campaign aims to facilitate the area’s recovery by providing a single, trusted source of information that empowers and inspires individuals and businesses to build their futures in Lower Manhattan. The campaign’s goal is the continuation of a clearinghouse for the distribution of current news and updates generated by city, state, and federal agencies and the private sector regarding Lower Manhattan to get the public what they need, when they need it.

Communicating in a clear and consistent manner with the diverse constituencies affected by the events of September 11th is key to the efforts to rebuild the area. The goal is to keep the public updated on the latest breaking news regarding important issues including: construction and the rebuilding process; traffic and transit, including street closings and access to the area; health, safety, and security; assistance and incentives; and community news, including meetings, events, and opportunities for involvement.

Public it Serves

LowerManhattan.info is available in English, Chinese, and Spanish. It serves all those who live in, work in, and visit Lower Manhattan, below Houston Street. These communities are distinct and large, including neighborhoods stretching from Tribeca to Chinatown and Battery Park City to SoHo as well as businesses ranging from Fortune 500 companies to small technology start ups

to owner-run corner delis. Despite the diverse needs of these constituencies, there are common core areas and issues of concern, including transportation, safety, rebuilding, and assistance programs. During the summer of 2002, through a series of focus groups comprised of Lower Manhattan residents and workers, it was learned that nearly half believed they received too little information about the area and its recovery, and 88 percent believed a one-stop source of information would be beneficial. (400 residents and 200 workers were interviewed in a series of 20-minute telephone interviews.) To meet this need, the Lower Manhattan Public Information Campaign was designed to efficiently convey information to Lower Manhattan's 155,000 residents south of Houston, 450,000 employees and 8,000,000 yearly visitors.

Program Description/Activities

The Lower Manhattan Public Information Campaign coordinates and disseminates information from city, state, and federal agencies and non-governmental entities in an effort to create a comprehensive, one-stop source for news and information about Lower Manhattan and its redevelopment. The primary information vehicle is the website, www.LowerManhattan.info. The site features a host of static information and innovative tools to help visitors learn about Lower Manhattan. Stories humanize the area and emphasize what makes Lower Manhattan a good place to live, work, and visit. The site is divided into sections organized around the topics people are most interested in. For example, "Get There & Get Around" helps users make sense of the many transportation options, provides detailed street maps, and issues updates on continuing construction projects. The "Rebuilding" section demonstrates ongoing progress at the World Trade Center site and explains the complex redevelopment process, including information relating to the status of major projects and related environmental review processes.

LowerManhattan.info has received more than 100 million hits and more than 30 million page views. It is linked to 1,541 websites and has been accessed by visitors in 81 different countries.

On a quarterly basis, a four-page, full-color LowerManhattan.info newsletter focused on a central theme, such as transportation downtown is created. 200,000 newsletters are distributed to retail locations, corporations, government agencies, non-profits, cultural institutions, and residential buildings across Lower Manhattan. The campaign uses traditional on- and off-line advertising, including emails, search engine placements, and outdoor advertisements on New York City's phone kiosks, buses, and bus shelters. In addition, direct person-to-person outreach is conducted at select locations of high pedestrian concentration. Through a grassroots campaign, posters have been displayed in more than 300 businesses, and more than 600,000 palm cards and 10,000 newsletters have been distributed on the street. All efforts aim to drive target audiences to the website and reinforce the central message that Lower Manhattan is open for business.

Public Participation/Benefits

This project will benefit businesses, workers, residents, and visitors in Lower Manhattan. The website is a vehicle that encourages government to be transparent and open to the public.

The total project cost is up to approximately \$1,300,000.00 for one year and two months. The first year of this project, including start-up costs, was approximately \$2,400,000 and was funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The total estimated cost for the Lower Manhattan Public Information Program is up to \$1,300,000.00.

III. Planning and Administration

LMDC engages in broad planning and administration activities relating to the recovery, remembrance, and rebuilding efforts in Lower Manhattan, defined by LMDC as the entire area of Manhattan south of Houston Street.

LMDC's planning activities began with the site planning for the World Trade Center site and the areas immediately surrounding the site. This planning will continue over the next year and include aspects such as public participation, design guidelines, and environmental review.

The agency's planning activities also include the other neighborhoods in Lower Manhattan that have been affected by September 11th and its aftermath. Specifically, LMDC's planning activities include expansive analyses of Lower Manhattan's transportation, traffic, housing and related amenities, open space, retail development, and economic development capacity, needs, and potential. Based on these analyses, LMDC will develop and propose concept plans for specific areas and projects in Lower Manhattan.

LMDC's planning activities focus on the administration of the competition and planning for the memorial.

LMDC's administration activities include and will continue to include extensive public information and coordination activities relating to the LMDC planning work. As part of its coordination activities, LMDC serves as a facilitator of outreach and discussions between affected communities as well as the public at large and government agencies and officials. LMDC's public information work will continue to include: public meetings and hearings; periodic printed newsletters and reports; an up-to-date, comprehensive, and interactive website (www.RenewNYC.com); extensive electronic communications; and other public outreach and participation efforts. In addition, LMDC continues to maintain its network of community contacts through its advisory councils.

HUD has authorized the use of up to 5% of the total grant to LMDC for costs associated with planning and administration activities, including costs for overhead, personnel, and consultants. This Partial Action Plan proposes the allocation of \$121,052.63 towards LMDC's planning and administration activities.

IV. Responses to Public Comments

This section describes the comments received from the public following the release of this proposed Partial Action Plan. The following section details the comments and responses relating to the draft Partial Action Plan, after it was released for public comment from September 18, 2003 to October 3, 2003.

LMDC received comments from 24 groups, businesses, officials, and individuals, including 13 civic/educational organizations (6 of which are based in Chinatown), 1 community official (chair of Community Board 2), 2 Lower Manhattan business owners, 3 residents of New York City outside of Lower Manhattan, 4 residents of Lower Manhattan, and 1 business owner in New York City outside of Lower Manhattan.

CHINATOWN TOURISM AND MARKETING PROGRAM

All comments on the Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program acknowledged that the funding for Chinatown in Partial Action Plan 5 is welcome and necessary. Though different criteria for funding were suggested, no commenter was against funding a Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program.

Seven commenters stated that the funds allocated for the Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program were insufficient. Some questioned the long-term sustainability of a project with such limited funds. Some wondered if the budget could even adequately jumpstart this very comprehensive campaign.

As stated in Partial Action Plan 5, LMDC's \$1 million contribution will be matched by the September 11th Fund's \$1 million grant. LMDC and the September 11th Fund understand the complexity, comprehensiveness, and multifaceted nature of a tourism and marketing campaign for Chinatown. Thus, the team selection criteria, as written in the *Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Campaign Request for Proposals*, stresses choosing a team based on their creativity and ability in accessing other resources, identifying and improving upon existing tourism and marketing initiatives and methods, and conducting a cost-efficient campaign that can be sustained when and if original funds are depleted.

The scope of this project is focused on stimulating tourism to Chinatown and encouraging changes in the Chinatown community as a whole that would promote tourism. It is an effort to implement the elements proposed in the numerous community meetings and research studies. However, efforts to revitalize Chinatown are not limited to this Partial Action Plan alone. Chinatown is included in the residential grants in Partial Action Plan 1 as well as the business grants and job creation and retention programs funded by Partial Action Plans 2 and 4. Partial Action Plans 3 and 4 provide funding for Columbus Park. Partial Action Plan 3 also funds History & Heritage Downtown in NYC, which includes the Chinatown-based Museum of Chinese in the Americas. All of these initiatives play key roles in the revitalization of Chinatown and supplement current efforts by many other community and civic organizations.

LMDC continues to explore other possible programs to fund in Chinatown through its planning and funding application process.

Six commenters expressed the need to address beautification, sanitation, traffic, parking, and streetscape issues in Chinatown.

While these issues will be taken into consideration once the campaign begins, the project is focused on tourism and marketing initiatives and business development. Major infrastructure improvements are addressed by separate initiatives of LMDC as well as by many other city agencies. LMDC and DOT are collaboratively leading a 7 month study of Chinatown's sanitation, traffic, parking, and accessibility issues. (More information can be found at www.RenewNYC.com under *Studies and RFPs/RFQs*.) Government-led improvements thus far include the repaving of major streets, parking added to Bayard Street, and a new water main installation at Bowery.

Many ideas for the campaign were proposed. Some examples were technical assistance and consulting services for businesses, cultural/community center, media usage, events with big name entertainers, informational bulletin boards, one-stop information kiosk, and promotion of culture/cuisine/nightlife/Eastern medicine. One commenter suggested marketing to Asians; another suggested targeting local New Yorkers.

All of these ideas are being reviewed by LMDC and the September 11th Fund and will be shared with the team selected to work on the campaign. For more information on team selection and the Request for Proposals, please refer to LMDC's website at www.RenewNYC.com.

Five commenters stressed the importance of acknowledging that Chinatown is also a residential community. Residents' concerns should be addressed. This campaign would be a good opportunity to create more jobs and to establish training facilities with ESL programs. Two commenters cautioned that the marketing program must avoid stereotypes and move away from ideas that Chinatown is foreign, exotic, strange, or un-American.

LMDC and the September 11th Fund recognize that Chinatown is home to many individuals and families; this aspect will be taken into account by the selected campaign team. The Request for Proposals requires all submitting teams to consist of a firm with industry experience plus at least one Chinatown based community organization. The campaign team will be selected based on, among other qualifications, its ability to establish rapport and confidence with the Chinatown community, to work with businesses and other groups in Chinatown, and to represent Chinatown to the media.

LMDC and the September 11th Fund recognize the diversity and culture of the Chinatown community. The Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program evolved from dialogue with a diverse group of community members, including residents of Chinatown; and the community will participate throughout the process. Specifically, the Chinatown Working Group, which was organized by LMDC and involves Chinatown community members, meets regularly to provide input on the Chinatown Tourism and Marketing Program in addition to many other issues such as the traffic problems mentioned above.

The campaign aims to stimulate the Chinatown economy through tourism and marketing. The campaign also aims to enhance the Chinatown community's ability to support tourism through technical assistance to businesses and tourism infrastructure.

Three groups requested funding from LMDC for their organizations and/or ideas.
Groups requesting funds must do so following the guidelines of either the funding application process or the Request for Proposals process. Please refer to www.RenewNYC.com for information.

Two organizations offered to help - one by acting as an advisory group, the other by donating a website.

LMDC and the September 11th Fund will provide copies of all comments to the selected team(s).

Two commenters were uncertain about the potential effectiveness of the campaign since several previous funding initiatives for Chinatown from other organizations have had little, if any, positive, long-lasting impact.

Backed by studies and reports as well as input at the community organization level, this plan incorporates proposed ideas in a comprehensive and cohesive campaign, thus maximizing efficiency and effectiveness. Moreover, this campaign is not one-time event driven, but rather a sustainable Chinatown revitalization endeavor as described in the Anticipated Scope of Services Section of the Request for Proposals.

LOWER MANHATTAN INFORMATION PROGRAM

All comments regarding the Lower Manhattan Information Program were generally supportive and asked for expansion of activities.

One commenter questioned whether the “job creation impact of these funds is being maximized...Other programs might offer more employment and have a broader impact on the community.”

The Lower Manhattan Information Program is part of a larger communication and outreach strategy that involves other projects. LowerManhattan.info was created in response to significant public demand. Through a series of focus groups, a website was deemed a necessary and effective answer to the need for a credible and reliable “one-stop” source of information regarding Lower Manhattan’s recovery.

One commenter was concerned that not many people know about the website or have access to the internet.

LowerManhattan.info employs a wide variety of outreach techniques to increase awareness of the website and to reach non-web using populations. On a quarterly basis, 200,000 LowerManhattan.info newsletters are distributed to retail locations, corporations, government agencies, non-profits, cultural institutions, and residential buildings across Lower Manhattan. As stated in the Partial Action Plan, traditional on and off line advertising is utilized. Thousands of palm cards are distributed on the streets to allow for direct contact with the public, posters are displayed in businesses throughout Lower Manhattan, and advertisements have been placed in Chinese language newspapers. In addition, the website is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese to reach as broad an audience as possible.

Two commenters asked that more funds be allocated for LowerManhattan.info to ensure that it continues in the future.

Through this Partial Action Plan, LMDC is currently funding one year of operation.

PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

No comments on Planning and Administration Activities were unsupportive. However, more transparency regarding spending and budgets was suggested.

Two commenters asked that LMDC “make public how it is monitoring its expenditures to ensure that adequate funds remain for the ends of these processes.”

As part of every Partial Action Plan, the amount of remaining funds and a summary of how the funds have thus far been used are stated. LMDC is required to report to HUD on a quarterly basis on all approved programs. These reports are available for review on LMDC’s website at www.RenewNYC.com.

OTHER GENERAL COMMENTS

Four commenters suggested the utilization of research (regarding Chinatown, community, communication initiatives) that is already underway by community groups.

LMDC will continue to take into consideration the studies conducted by other groups.

Four commenters expressed the need for better communication regarding LMDC programs. One letter urged the LMDC to hold public hearings on the Partial Action Plans and the allocation of LMDC funds. Another commenter referred to a survey report concluding that many people are unaware of redevelopment plans. These commenters suggested various groups that should be included in the rebuilding dialogue such as young people, residents of adjacent areas, small businesses, local real estate and banking firms, and local advocates.

LMDC is committed to an open, inclusive, and transparent planning process in which the public has a central role. Extensive public involvement is achieved through multiple channels of communication. Advisory Councils representing a broad spectrum of groups affected by September 11th are consulted. Board Meetings are held monthly and open to the public. LMDC regularly initiates contact with community members and organizations and attends Community Board Meetings. Partial Action Plans are distributed widely for public comments, which are then collected through both traditional and electronic methods. LowerManhattan.info provides the public information about the redevelopment plans.