



I'd Get More School Funds — Even in a Downturn

By FERNANDO FERRER

The Daily News asked the major mayoral candidates what they would do with the city budget. This is the fourth in the series.

A Ferrer administration's sound management and fiscal practices would allow the city to improve public education, even in an economic downturn.

Unlike Mayor Giuliani, we will fight Albany for our city's fair share of education dollars. We'll sign New York onto the multicounty census lawsuit to remedy the undercounting of at least 150,000 New Yorkers. We'll also advocate eliminating community school boards, reducing the unnecessary expense of this bureaucracy.

As we conduct city business, we must:

Stop the Giuliani-Vallone tax giveaways that threaten our economy and inhibit investment in the after-school activities that keep kids out of harm's way.

Impose budget discipline by reviewing agency functions not related to service delivery.

Reform the Board of Education, slashing bureaucratic waste to help pay teachers as professionals.

In contrast to the Giuliani administration's negotiating no labor productivity or long-term cost savings, a Ferrer administration will view city workers as partners, tap their expertise, improve productivity and negotiate contracts that reduce net costs.

We should target tax reductions to retain businesses and residents in the city and ensure funding for essential services. I support:

Eliminating the sales tax on clothing and most essential household items.

Reforming the personal income tax to cut working-class and middle-class taxes without reducing revenue. The Giuliani-Vallone scheme saves the average taxpayer just pennies a day but deprives the city of \$800 million.

Fighting to restore the commuter tax.

Introducing co-op and condo tax equity and eliminating property tax abuses, netting new revenue with no tax increase.

The current administration throws money at big corporations to stay in Manhattan but fails to offer a plan for economic growth north of 96th St. and in the other boroughs. A Ferrer administration will extend economic opportunity to every community by growing manufacturing, telecommunications and back-office jobs, and by improving front-end high tech industry growth and biomedical research.

As we've done in the Bronx, we'll help firms find space throughout the city. We'll build 150,000 low-, moderate- and middle-income housing units, improve public education, develop transit infrastructure and work on rail freight tunnel and intermodal centers to reduce our dependence on trucking and keep our airports competitive.

A strong economy coupled with better schools, more affordable housing and better police-community relations will make New York work for all New Yorkers.

Monday: Alan Hevesi

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From: News and Views | Opinion |
Thursday, July 19, 2001

How I Would Manage The City's Money

The Daily News is asking the major mayoral candidates to explain how they would deal with the city budget. This is the third in the series.

By HERMAN BADILLO

To maintain our economic vitality, as mayor I would take steps to reduce taxes and develop a strong business climate that would create jobs in local neighborhoods.

First and foremost, I'd reduce personal income taxes. Even though unemployment fell almost a whole percentage point from March 2000 to February 2001, New York must take the lead in counteracting any potential economic downturn on the horizon. The extra disposable income of city residents will undoubtedly kindle consumption, economic growth and further tax revenue.

New York also must stimulate local economic activity. Too many of the city's residents and businesses go to the suburbs for goods and services. Given the city's population, it should have tens of thousands of more jobs in the entertainment and retail industries, as well as thousands in the wholesale trade and light-manufacturing sector.

The absence of these local jobs is especially detrimental to the poor, as these jobs tend to require fewer skills and less education.

By improving the transportation system in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens, we can lower the prices of goods that are more expensive in the metropolitan area.

Another way to increase retail jobs is to develop the main streets of the five boroughs, such as in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. New stores must open in place of those that have closed.

Regulations such as licensing requirements ought to be made simple. Unnecessary, complicated regulations only stifle development by adding huge

costs to doing business in the city. At the same time, we must lobby against federal policies that force businesses to provide services to non-profitable rural and suburban areas at the expense of higher prices for city residents who must subsidize this inefficiency.

As a Republican mayor, I'd also endorse measures to close the \$8 billion gap between taxes sent to Washington from New York City and federal spending in the city. The likely federal tax cut will close this gap by about \$4 billion, causing our economy to expand.

The most important thing we can do with the extra tax revenue that will be generated is to ensure a sound education system. A concerted effort must be made to establish clear standards for students and schools. Forty percent of black and Hispanic students do not graduate from high school. This is unacceptable.

As mayor, I'll bring back standards, as I have at City University of New York. Before I became chairman of CUNY, they were handing out diplomas to people who were studying to be teachers but failed the teacher's exam after graduating.

We must provide the right incentives for the success of our students by eliminating social promotion in public schools. The same goes for teachers: Only good ones deserve better pay.

The city budget must not compensate failure, but instead, usher in another renaissance by rewarding achievement.

Tomorrow: Fernando Ferrer



From: News and Views | Opinion |
Wednesday, July 18, 2001

My 5-Point Plan For City's Money

The Daily News is asking the major mayoral candidates to explain how they would deal with the city budget. This is the second in the series.

By MARK GREEN

Because of an unprecedented economic boom, select tax cuts and the halving of crime, New York City saw significant economic growth in the last half of the 1990s. But a slowing economy demands a new plan for growth.

Putting a stadium in every borough is not economic development — it's nostalgia. I have a five-point plan to help create 400,000 new jobs in all five boroughs and enable the city to weather a slowdown without resorting to budget gimmicks, tax hikes or service cuts. Here's my plan:

- Smarter fiscal management: Given that this city already places one of the nation's highest tax burdens on businesses, it's irresponsible to talk about raising taxes on the brink of a possible recession.

I'll make the tough choices necessary to fund my priorities — education and safety. For example, I'll shift \$250 million away from replacing jail beds that are now empty to fund school construction. That way, we can cut class size in early grades to no more than 20 students.

I'll reduce a \$300 million Police Department overtime budget so the city can fund initiatives such as tuition assistance for new officers and fair pay increases. And I'll eliminate the tax on energy and phone bills to help low- and middle-income New Yorkers.

Finally, I'll work with municipal labor unions to find savings in city agencies and provide productivity incentives to workers. And a Green administration will reform the city's multibillion-dollar contracting process to weed out corruption, improve the quality of work and save hundreds of millions of dollars.

- A 21st century workforce: We have to reform workforce development programs to create a new middle class based on information technology. Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich recently joined me at City Hall to endorse my plan to

create a workforce partnership between government, business, academia and communities.

- Across the river: Downtown Brooklyn enjoys superior transit access, great universities and a growing cultural district. The city and state can capitalize on this by creating a Downtown Brooklyn Development Corp.
- Community entrepreneurial development: By building private-public partnerships, the city can help create jobs in "comeback neighborhoods" across the five boroughs, as Sen. Robert Kennedy envisioned in Bedford-Stuyvesant 35 years ago.
- Time to build again: We need to build the Second Ave. subway, an expanded Javits Center, the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel and 50,000 new units of housing to stay economically ascendant in the new century and as a legacy for our grandchildren.

Tomorrow: Herman Badillo

From: News and Views | Opinion |
Tuesday, July 17, 2001

How I'd Spend The City's Money

The Daily News is asking the major mayoral candidates to explain how they would deal with the city budget.

By PETER VALLONE

In New York City, the need for resources and services forever exceeds the supply. A wise manager must make wise choices, pursuing innovative ways to finance the city's needs and recognizing the balance between increasing spending and cutting taxes to spur economic development. This requires shrewd planning and a detailed knowledge of city government.

As speaker of the City Council, I have been responsible for passing the city's \$39 billion budget — from which I cut billions of dollars in the 1990s. In those years, the Council eliminated the commercial rent tax in the outer boroughs, was responsible for creating the largest tax cut in city history when we got rid of the 12½% personal income tax surcharge and has passed budgets on time.

I know that the first order of an effective mayor is establishing priorities. Here are mine:

- **Crime:** Back in 1991, I launched the Safe Streets, Safe City program that put 10,000 new police officers on the streets. The budget and social services were under tremendous strain, but we understood that a city cannot be great if its people live in fear. As mayor, I will continue to commit resources to protecting our citizens from crime.
- **Education:** The city is short 69,000 seats in our schools. I propose dedicating residential property taxes exclusively to our schools. This will increase the city's contribution by half-a-billion dollars a year and create a stable funding stream. It does not mean raising taxes or cutting services, it means giving teachers and students the tools they need to succeed.
- **Affordable housing:** I have long advocated an affordable housing trust fund that will be set up as a public benefit corporation and will provide long-term and low-interest loans or direct capital grants to developers. This will be financed by the flow of property dollars generated from the sale of the World Trade Center and will secure tens of thousands of new affordable housing units. We need to

- leverage public and private resources and find additional streams of revenue for another needed 225,000 housing units.
- Transportation: If we don't invest in our buses and subways, we can't grow. I would fight hard to get the state and federal dollars needed to make improvements and invest in new capital projects such as the proposed Second Ave. subway line. I will fight to reinstate the commuter tax. This would provide \$500 million a year that could be earmarked to issue bonds for capital projects.
 - Economic development: My commitment to supporting our theaters and museums is unwavering and critical to our economic future. I also will fight to keep jobs in New York City by cutting taxes, providing tax incentives to businesses and ensuring access to vital and affordable services.

As mayor, I will work diligently to create a city where working and middle-class families — the backbone of our city — don't just survive, but thrive.

Tomorrow: Mark Green



Pro-Business Means Pro-School

The Daily News asked the major mayoral candidates how they would deal with the city budget.

This is the fifth in the series.

By ALAN G. HEVESI

After years of a booming economy, the city should be in strong financial shape, but instead it's projecting huge deficits. As the economy slows, we're likely to face some hard choices.

As mayor, my goals will be reforming our educational system, maintaining the fight against crime and increasing the supply of affordable housing.

The key to improving our economic competitiveness is improving the quality of our schools. That means a certified teacher in every class and smaller classes. A revamped vocational education program should prepare students not going to college for the jobs local businesses offer. We should expand adult education so everyone can meet technology's ever-changing demands. That's why I will build 200 computer learning centers.

To ensure that we continue to have the best police force, we must provide competitive pay, up-to-date equipment and training, and make police and communities partners in crimefighting.

We must expand our housing stock, especially for working and middle-class families. That's why I've proposed dedicating revenues from Battery Park City and the World Trade Center to help finance 105,000 units of housing for low-, moderate- and middle-income families over five years.

In the meantime, I would review every city agency and, if necessary, freeze or cut spending to expand in priority areas. Agencies whose activities have the greatest impact on economic growth should be modernized immediately.

I supported and even recommended many of the business tax cuts that have helped the city's economy grow over the last seven years. We should continue to

eliminate local taxes, such as the city's corporation tax, unincorporated business tax and commercial rent tax that impede economic growth.

I would promote sectors of the economy that offer the potential for growth, such as software and biotech, by creating support offices, like the Mayor's Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting. We need to protect our manufacturing base — especially the garment industry, which provides more than 200,000 jobs. I would help small businesses, the source of most new jobs in the city.

We must modernize our infrastructure so it offers support to growth, not bottlenecks. That means ensuring a reliable supply of reasonably priced electricity. It also means expanding our mass transit system, including a full Second Ave. subway, an extension of the No. 7 line to the Javits Center and a one-seat ride to both airports. We should build a rail freight tunnel to maintain our competitiveness and create jobs.

In a weak economy, it won't be easy doing all this. But a mayor with the right experience and the ability to get everyone working together can make that happen.

Next: Michael Bloomberg

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