THE McGUIRE COMEBACK PLAN

The McGuire Comeback Plan is a visionary blueprint to revitalize and rebuild our city, kickstarting the most inclusive economic recovery in New York City history. Under Ray’s leadership, New York City will be the center of the global economy, a juggernaut of job creation; the best place in the world to start and run a small business; the most forward-looking, innovative city in the world; and a place that helps its people overcome current challenges and participate in the opportunities of a more equitable future.

New York is facing the most severe economic crisis in generations. The devastation caused by COVID-19 combined with years of systemic inequities in the economy, education, and healthcare has put this city at a dangerous crossroads. The budget deficit is large and growing.

Ray’s longstanding and unparalleled success with managing budgets in times of crisis means that he knows the steps required to heal our city’s economy. As we fight for our fair share of federal aid, we must also review inefficiencies and spending levels, and consider tax increases on those who can afford it — including Ray himself — if needed. But Ray recognizes that we can neither cut nor tax our way out of this worsening crisis. The only way to come back is to grow.

A fast and inclusive economic recovery is the foundation of everything Ray will do as mayor. Without people living in, working in, and visiting New York, our city will have no revenue to pay for core services or innovative programs that create opportunity in our communities. Put simply: no jobs, no city.

We cannot afford to wait for our economy to recover. We will need to make smart investments in stimulus and relief programs to accelerate our city's comeback. Only then will we be able to deliver on the big, bold ideas that New Yorkers need and deserve.

Ray's Comeback Plan will bring back more than 500,000 good jobs, at least half of which will be in small businesses, through:

1. Immediate financial support for struggling local businesses, streamlining permits, inspections, and approvals to help businesses open or re-open quickly

2. A wage subsidy to bring back 50,000 jobs at the small businesses hardest hit by the pandemic

3. A major infrastructure program that will create jobs rebuilding our roads and bridges, fixing subway elevators, building and renovating affordable housing, and making our city more sustainable
4. Working with our unions to help ensure good wages and benefits

5. Targeted job training that gets more New Yorkers the skills they need to get good jobs

6. Affordable childcare for all New Yorkers, which will grow jobs in early childhood education and help parents reenter the workforce

The city's Independent Budget Office estimates New York won't return to pre-COVID employment until the end of 2024. Ray's plan will accelerate that timeline. Every day we beat the IBO forecast is another day of growth and opportunity for New Yorkers.

All of these programs will kick off within Ray's first 100 days as mayor. In fact, Ray recommends that many be implemented immediately — but, as mayor, he will implement or scale these programs based on the needs of small businesses and families on his first day in office.

We need to go big, go small and go forward — all at once. That is the idea at the heart of Ray's economic program. The following details some of the ways Ray will accelerate job creation and get New Yorkers back to work. Many of these ideas can be done via executive authority, while others will require partnering with the city council, and the state or federal government. Ray will continue growing the Comeback Plan as he meets with New Yorkers in all five boroughs and hears their needs, their concerns and their ideas.
GO SMALL

Prior to the pandemic, 98 percent of businesses in New York City were small businesses with fewer than 100 employees, while 89 percent were very small businesses with fewer than 20 employees. Now, one in three may be gone for good. Our city cannot come back unless we preserve and rebuild our small businesses and bring back the good jobs they provide.

To address the critical cash crunch our small businesses are facing, Ray will launch a sweeping package of immediate relief, including:

**Get 50,000 New Yorkers back to work with the Comeback Job Accelerator.**

The Comeback Job Accelerator will bring back 50,000 jobs by covering 50 percent of a worker’s salary for one year at small businesses that were hardest hit by the pandemic. Small businesses could apply for the subsidy for multiple employees, but the program would likely be capped at 50 percent of a business’s January 2020 headcount. Workers could be full or part time.

Ray would work with small business leaders to tailor the scope of the program to businesses with the greatest need but would target the program to businesses that lost more than 40 percent of total revenue compared to 2019 levels. Ray would also ensure the money goes first to communities hardest hit by unemployment as a result of the pandemic.

This type of subsidized job program has numerous benefits compared to other forms of financial assistance:

- It allows subsidized workers to access additional federal funds via the earned income tax credit and child tax credit, since those are generally only available to employed people with incomes.
- It will help keep small businesses alive since they can rehire employees at a reduced rate.
- As businesses and the broader economy rebound, most workers are retained and continue earning even after the public subsidy has sunset.
- It also has low administrative overhead since companies know how to recruit and rehire employees.

Ray believes this program should launch in 2021. Small businesses and workers can’t wait until Ray becomes mayor in 2022 for this program to go into effect, and the broader economy needs the stimulus impact as quickly as possible. Ray believes that the current administration should
implement this program this year. However, he is prepared to implement or scale the program as needed once in office.

**Allow small businesses to keep their sales tax receipts for one year and use those funds to bring back employees or pay utilities.**

Ray would work with the state to allow small retailers, restaurants and other businesses that collect sales tax to keep the city portion of the sales tax for one year as an immediate infusion of additional capital.

**Allow city permits and licenses to renew for the next 12 months without any fees.**

Small businesses are required to renew a number of permits and licenses each year and pay annual renewal fees. For all of 2022, Ray will automatically renew some categories of licenses and allow businesses to self-certify renewal of some others for businesses under 100 employees. Fees will also be waived for new small businesses. Ray will also advocate for the state to extend liquor licenses for an additional 12 months past their expiration date or waive the fees associated with renewal as well as the tax charged by the city on those renewals. Inspections associated with permit renewals that relate to health and safety will still take place.

**Help provide rent relief or forgiveness to small businesses.**

With revenues slashed, thousands of NYC small business owners found themselves unable to pay all or even a portion of their rent in 2020. At the same time, some building owners — especially small landlords — are in danger of defaulting on mortgage payments or property taxes if they remain unable to collect rent, which could lead to a spike in foreclosures that would further destabilize the city’s economy. These landlords are small businesses too — including many minority property owners. Many of them would like to offer rent relief to their tenants, but do not have the financial ability to do so without some government assistance.

Avoiding a joint eviction and foreclosure crisis requires a number of interventions that would help both small businesses and small property owners. Ray will create a menu of financial relief options that can be made available to small property owners in exchange for forgiving or lowering rent for small business tenants, or providing early lease breaks, subleasing, and other tenant benefits and protections. Offerings would be based on a building owner’s total rent collections for 2020 and projected collections for future years.

**Get small business owners relief on their utility bills.**

As a result of the pandemic, many small business owners have been unable to pay their utility bills and lack the resources to catch up. While utility companies may need to recoup some back
payments in order to cover costs and maintain infrastructure, they have a vested interest in maintaining a customer base by helping small businesses stay alive. Ray will work with the small business community, Con Edison, and other utility companies to negotiate agreements that would reduce costs for small businesses or create extended payment options while providing the resources utility companies need to maintain good service.

Work with credit rating agencies to suspend credit scoring starting January 2022.

Ray will work with credit agencies to ensure that the economic impact of COVID will not have a negative impact on credit scores for small business owners.

Launch the Comeback Bank Initiative to make capital accessible and available to small businesses through community banks.

Small businesses — especially family-owned and family-run businesses, and those owned by people of color and immigrants — have a very difficult time accessing credit. And, as a result of the pandemic, small businesses across the city are desperately short on capital. Larger banks often require years of audited financial statements and high credit scores. They also prefer to make loans of more than $1 million, while many small businesses need loans of $20,000 or less.

To rebuild our neighborhoods, we need to build an army of lenders who can reach these small businesses. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) are non-profit organizations specifically designed to reach them. Examples of NYC-based CDFIs include Ascendus (formerly Accion East), BOC Capital Corp, Community Capital NY, Neighborhood Trust, and Grameen America.

But these community banks have been underfunded and under-supported for years. If we want our comeback to reach every New Yorkers, we need to get resources in the hands of community banks to fund small and minority-owned businesses and the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Ray will leverage his deep relationships in the business and philanthropic community to launch a Comeback Bank Initiative, calling in every favor to supplement city support with capital that can be used for expanded lending through community banks. Because small businesses have different needs that require different financing strategies, offerings would include both short-term and long-term loans, as well as philanthropic grants that could be issued through community banks.

Additionally, the Comeback Bank Initiative will provide training, technical assistance, and technology support to the staff of the community banks and help digitize and modernize their operations so that they can better serve small businesses.
The Comeback Bank Initiative will put community banks at the forefront of efforts to drive small business growth and job creation in our neighborhoods.

**Make NYC the Best Place to Start and Run a Small Business.**

As Ray meets with small business owners, they are consistently describing fundamental barriers to doing business in New York City — like red tape, long delays for city approvals and high costs. Ray will launch a package of initiatives to make it easier for New Yorkers to start and grow a small business. This will include:

- **Treat Small Businesses as the City's Customers.** Ray will require all city agencies, starting with the Department of Small Business Services, to transform their approach to the city's business community into a customer service approach. When small businesses do well, New Yorkers do well, and Ray will treat them as the city's customers — not sources of revenue. And we'll prioritize the city's smallest businesses and New Yorkers looking to start new ventures in low-income neighborhoods and create good-paying, accessible jobs.

- **Shot Clock for Permit Approvals.** Ray will require all city agencies responsible for new business inspections, permit approvals, and other authorizations to complete phase one of the process for most types of small businesses within 90 days of receiving an application, up to and including scheduling inspections. He will also require that the entire process be completed in 180 days. Assuming the business's application is complete, any agency that does not meet the 90 day deadline will have to cut its permitting fees for that business by 50 percent. If the agency does not meet the 180-day deadline, through no fault of the business owner, that fee will be waived entirely. On a quarterly basis, the mayor's office will make public the amount of time it takes to complete the permitting process and the number of permit fees that have been reduced or waived in any year, to ensure transparency and encourage efficient processing. Ray will also determine where agencies may need additional capacity to keep up with the number of new businesses applications and increase resources accordingly.

- **Opportunity to Cure Violations Without Paying a Fine.** There are currently only 43 violations for which the city will waive fines if businesses prove they have cured the issue within 30 days. Ray will work with every relevant agency to expand that list to other violations that do not create meaningful risk to health and safety. And instead of the burden of proof being on the small business owner, Ray will require the city to verify that the issue has not been cured before a fine is levied.

- **Create a Real One-Stop for Small Businesses.** While the Department of Small Business Services has consolidated some processes and offerings online, Ray will build
a true one-stop portal that will streamline the application and inspection process and allow small businesses the option of easily accessing online support from across his administration.

- **Deputy Mayor for Small, Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses.** Ray will appoint a current or former small business owner to serve as deputy mayor for small, women- and minority- owned businesses. The deputy mayor will be empowered to drive reform and greater accountability across all agencies that interact with small businesses and mediate interagency disputes.

- **Red Tape Commission.** Under the leadership of the mayor, the deputy mayor for small, women- and minority- owned businesses will also head up a Red Tape Commission to identify additional ways to reduce burdensome regulation and unnecessary costs and delays — top to bottom — across all agencies. The Red Tape Commission will meet on a biannual basis, review the performance of city agencies in meeting their permitting goals, issue letter grades to agency heads and provide direction on how to improve agency performance.

- **Empowering BIDs to Supercharge Small Businesses.** Some of the city’s business improvement districts offer robust services to local small businesses, but not all have the resources to be able to offer programs at the same scale. Ray will work with BIDs to create or expand their offerings to local businesses, enable them to replicate best practices from the most successful programs, and serve as a local directory for all available resources — all in order to supercharge the growth of small businesses in every neighborhood. Ray will also ensure BIDs have the capacity to connect small businesses to additional supports, including the NYC Small Business Resource Network, non-profits providing legal and back office services, and grant and loan resources.
GO BIG

New Yorkers Rebuild New York: Create good jobs with the biggest infrastructure plan in generations.

Ray will launch an aggressive infrastructure program that accelerates spending on shovel-ready projects and includes a newly designed, fully embedded workforce development program to help workers displaced from other industries access these jobs. Ray will also make sure public and private sector unions have a seat at the table for all new projects.

Ray is uniquely qualified to modernize our infrastructure after decades in business. He will convene creative public-private partnerships and bring global capital to New York.

Projects will be evaluated on a number of criteria, including:

- Whether they are shovel ready or can be made shovel ready;
- How many jobs are created for every dollar spent;
- How urgently the work needs to get done;
- Whether they benefit the highest need communities;
- Whether they are sustainable and support environmental justice.

Ray will prioritize key investment areas, including:

- **Threats to Safety.** New York City has 67 fracture critical bridges and averages 459 water main breaks per year. These repairs must be accelerated for the future of our city and the safety of New Yorkers.

- **Safe and Affordable Housing.** Construction of new housing that is affordable for the lowest income New Yorkers and preservation of affordable housing; affordable senior housing that provides services to older New Yorkers and allows them to remain in their communities; and supportive housing that can help move people out of shelter and help prevent homelessness; NYCHA repairs, focusing on underlying conditions and issues that are harming residents’ health.

- **Sustainability.** Accelerating resilient infrastructure in Sandy-impacted neighborhoods like Coney Island, Hunts Point, Lower Manhattan, Red Hook, and the Rockaways, using creating funding strategies and public private partnerships; green energy projects, especially those that unlock permanent job opportunities — like the development
of a wind energy hub in South Brooklyn and the North Shore of Staten Island, which will boost maritime industrial jobs; installing solar panels, green roofs, and robust building retrofit programs designed to enhance energy efficiency and environmental wellness; charging stations and other infrastructure needed to support electric vehicles in all five boroughs.

• **Community Infrastructure.** Accelerate construction or upgrades to primary care and urgent care facilities in neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID-19; extend affordable broadband to the 1.5 million New Yorkers who currently lack access; convert vacant lots to open space and rehabilitate parks that have fallen into disrepair.

• **Transit projects.** Build a smart grid to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, reduce congestion, conserve energy and create more dedicated bus lanes. Ray will also work with the State and Federal governments to ensure New Yorkers have access to good jobs created through major projects like the Gateway Tunnel, and to find ways to accelerate critical repairs to our subway system, including broken elevators at stations around the city.

Ray will leverage his expertise in project financing as well as modern approaches to construction to build more — and build faster — and get New Yorkers back to work as quickly as possible. This would include:

• **Public-Private Partnerships.** Some projects will be financed through private investment that is paid back over time through revenue or savings generated by the new infrastructure. This could include leveraging private funds to accelerate resiliency projects in neighborhoods impacted by Superstorm Sandy, or the use of green banks to finance clean energy projects.

• **Federal Funds.** Given Ray’s relationships within the Biden administration, he will be well-positioned to secure New York City’s fair share of federal funds for infrastructure development projects from a variety of sources, including the $3 trillion for green infrastructure and $100 billion for affordable housing President Biden promised to make available to projects around the country, as well as billions of dollars for affordable housing construction included in the most recent federal stimulus bill; and programs like the Federal Transit Administration’s New Starts program and Federal Highway Administration grants.

• **Expanding and Accelerating City Capital Investments.** New York City is currently **more than $30 billion** under its debt cap, which means that even with reduced revenue projections from property taxes, there is room to take advantage of historically low interest rates to accelerate projects that would otherwise be slated for out years, and increase planned borrowing beyond the current five-year plan. The city also only commits (spends) just over 50 percent of funds in the budget for each given year,
and the rest of the money — and the jobs — get pushed to out-years. That can be improved through better planning, increased management and accountability, and increasing project management staff where needed. In addition, by identifying and prioritizing shovel-ready projects and aligning those with agency priorities, the city can accelerate capital spending currently planned for out-years in order to create jobs when they are needed most and take advantage of historically low interest rates. Ray will also prioritize the most job-intensive projects: For example, equipment purchases that can be safely pushed to out years can be postponed in favor of construction projects that create more jobs in the five boroughs.

- **Reducing Costs and Accelerating Projects.** Ray will work to modernize the city’s building codes to encourage innovation and support the use of new building materials and alternative power innovations that can reduce cost, increase usable data collection, improve resiliency, and empower the city to anticipate outcomes across programs and initiatives.

Ray will prioritize projects that are both designed and built sustainably and with the impacts of climate change in mind. We need to build things once, build them right and build them to last.

Ray will ensure that every agency managing infrastructure projects is meeting or exceeding MWBE contracting targets and will invest in expanded workforce training designed specifically for the trade jobs and other opportunities created through these investments.

**Guarantee a summer job for every high school student who wants one.**

A series of summer jobs changes Ray’s life. He dug footers, laid tile, changed bed pans, DCed IVs, and built boxes in the basement of Fields Dress Shop. Ray will leverage his relationships with both big and small NYC employers to launch the Comeback Summer Job Program, building on the existing Summer Youth Employment Program and guaranteeing a summer job to every New York City public high school student who wants one.

Summer jobs help young people develop skills and relationships that can help them get that first job out of high school or valuable internships during college. They also provide a critical source of income for many families.

**Host the NYC Comeback Festival — the biggest festival in city history.**

To signal that we are open for business and make this the top destination for travelers from around the world, New York City will host a yearlong festival kicking off in Spring of 2022, which will include venues, galleries, performance stages, bars, restaurants and parks in every city neighborhood. It will be supported by grants for up to 1,000 artists to create projects and
activations in vacant commercial spaces and outdoor venues, as well as a global marketing effort showing the world that NYC is the place to visit in 2022 and beyond.

For New York City to really bounce back, we need to get New Yorkers out of their homes, taking advantage of all the great amenities our city has to offer. At the same time, people around the world will want to start travelling. We need to give them a reason to choose New York over other destinations.

Getting visitors to return is also central to our recovery. Prior to the pandemic, there were 291,000 direct jobs in tourism in New York City, more than in finance (which had 268,200) and nearly twice as many jobs as in the city’s tech sector (146,000). Tourists are also responsible for 24 percent of all credit card sales at city bars and restaurants.

Ray will kickstart our cultural, tourism, and nightlife industries — and do so in a way that not only brings back Broadway and the incredible ecosystem around it, but also drives visitors and spending to communities that were hardest hit by the pandemic.

The Comeback Festival will be boosted by a global marketing campaign centered around the festival, building on the city’s marketing budget with private sector donations and free advertising space provided by NYC-based global media companies.

Ray will also raise private and foundation matching funds to provide grants to artists to create projects and activations in vacant commercial spaces and outdoor venues, ensuring our city’s return as the center of the creative world and attracting spending from both tourists and New Yorkers in local businesses.

Make New York City the global center of technology with a focus on equity and diversity.

Over the last decade, New York City has developed an innovation sector that rivals Silicon Valley or any other tech hub in the world. We are now poised to become the global destination for technology, and to pioneer a new model of a diverse and accessible technology industry — and Ray has the relationships and experience to lead the way.

- **Treat tech companies as partners in economic growth.** While cities like Miami have been actively courting technology companies, New York City has failed to champion our own incredible technology ecosystem. Ray will use his mayoral bully pulpit and global network of business relationships to promote New York City as the best place for technology talent, while also working with our technology companies to increase local hiring and support and mentor startups from diverse communities. He will also find opportunities to match growing technology companies with vacant office space, accelerating our recovery and giving more companies a real footprint in the five boroughs.
• **Universal access to broadband.** More than 1.5 million NYC residents do not have a mobile or home broadband connection. As part of Ray's infrastructure plan, he will extend broadband to every home and small business in New York City. This will help close the digital divide for families experiencing homelessness, help students access online educational offerings, and enable more New Yorkers to transition to tech jobs. It will also remove one of the barriers for New Yorkers in underserved communities to launch and grow local startups.

• **Create a Smart City.** New York City has not done enough to leverage our technology talent to modernize city services and build smart infrastructure in ways that better serve New Yorkers and make our city even more attractive for innovation. Ray will put local tech companies to work building a smart grid, which will help them to grow and create jobs while also improving safety, managing traffic flow and reducing government waste. He will also tap our local tech talent to apply innovative solutions that would make government more accessible and responsive to New Yorkers — for example, by designing a single universal app for all city services.

• **Get more funding to local tech companies and underrepresented communities looking to launch startups.** Ray will leverage the city's large IT budget to provide more opportunities for local tech companies to compete for public dollars. He will also explore opportunities to match investments by venture firms that are willing to provide seed or A-round financing to underrepresented entrepreneurs, as many people of color and women still struggle to access the capital they need to launch or grow a startup.

• **Make CUNY the #1 supplier of tech talent to NYC companies.** Ray will partner with CUNY to make it the #1 supplier of tech talent to NYC companies and double the number of underrepresented New Yorkers graduating with STEM degrees. Ray will also increase support for remedial education programs that get students ready to succeed at CUNY.

**Create local job hubs in neighborhoods in all five boroughs.**

Ray will create public-private partnerships to help community organizations invest in commercial corridors in neighborhoods around the city, with public-space improvements, flexible workspace that can support local jobs and workforce training for in demand skills.
Ensure that businesses owned by people of color and women receive a fair share of city spending.

For much of New York City’s history, businesses owned by people of color or women were unable to win contracts to provide goods or services like construction management to city government — the types of large institutional contracts that can help a business grow and create more jobs.

While New York City’s Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Program was intended to help level the playing field, the city has long failed to meet its overall MWBE goals. And even among categories of businesses, some business owners have been especially neglected. For example, based on the city’s MWBE law, Black-owned firms are targeted to receive 8 percent of all MWBE construction spending — but last year received only 0.7 percent.

The result is that many MWBEs find themselves in a vicious cycle, year after year. They are too small to win meaningful city contracts and without city contracts they lack the revenue needed to grow.

Ray is prepared to use the discretionary powers of the mayor’s office to advance large city projects only if they have a clear path to providing contracts and city dollars to underrepresented businesses to the maximum extent allowable by law.

Ray knows that creating a level playing field for MWBEs will require focus and leadership from the top, and a different approach to the MWBE program that provides funding and professional development to small MWBEs so they can compete for contracts. He will focus on categories of businesses for which the city has fallen especially short in reaching its targets, including Black and brown-owned businesses. He will also make sure that contracts are actually going to smaller and newer businesses, rather than just to the largest and more established firms that have historically dominated the contract pool.

To accomplish this, Ray will advance the following initiatives:

- **Create a $50 million loan fund targeted to small MWBEs, especially in the construction field.** City contracts generally do not include upfront payments, and many small MWBEs don’t have the cash on hand to front the cost of workers and materials. As part of his Comeback Bank Initiative, Ray will designate $50 million in advances or low-interest loans to help these business owners access city contracts.

- **Provide MWBEs with mentorship and other professional supports so they can win contracts.** The majority of certified MWBEs never receive a single city contract. Ray
will transform the city's role in certifying businesses to include capacity building, access to advanced education, professional development, networking and financial accounting assistance — the kinds of things newer MWBEs especially need to qualify for and win contracts. He will create a mandatory onboarding platform that includes a mentorship program whereby the largest MWBEs in their field of expertise must devote an annual 100 hours of support and mentorship to some of the newest certified businesses. Mentor matching programs will be thoughtfully created, tracked and reported on each year.

• **Break up larger contracts to allow smaller MWBEs to serve as prime contractors.** The City has consistently structured contracts in ways that relegated most MWBEs to the role of subcontractors, which prevents them from accessing the financing and bonding needed to grow and create more jobs. Ray will direct agencies to split more projects and purchases into smaller contracts so small firms can serve as prime contractors and vendors, while being mindful to avoid significant cost increases. This will allow small businesses to establish and enhance their own performance record and to obtain the benefit of more consistent and earlier payments, which will ultimately lead to more and bigger contracts. Ray will also align tech companies to provide access to hardware and software required to support assignments smaller MWBEs may need to prepare and deliver work on time and on budget.

• **Implement a “Rooney Rule” for Underrepresented MWBEs.** For categories in which qualified MWBEs are certified but are not receiving a fair share of contracts, Ray will work to implement a Rooney Rule, requiring agencies to consider at least one MWBE firm from the same industry for new bidding opportunities for at least one year. The Rooney Rule refers to an NFL policy that requires all teams with a head coaching vacancy to interview at least two candidates of color before making a new hire. It has been adopted by a number of private companies to increase diversity without instituting hiring mandates that violate the law.

• **Utilize technology to change the way we measure, plan, and target contracting for different types of MWBEs.** New York City has access to a tremendous amount of data regarding its MWBE contracting, but currently does little with that data to improve the program and identify talent gaps and shortcomings. Ray will take a data-driven approach and leverage the latest technology to determine which businesses are being left behind, who is underserved in specific contract areas, and the reasons why some businesses only receiving smaller or more marginal sub-contracts. That information will allow us to better target the support needed, recruit underrepresented business owners, and hold both agencies and prime vendors truly accountable.

• **Create size categories to provide more opportunities for all firms in the MWBE Program.** Right now small MWBEs are forced to compete against much larger and
more established businesses for a single pool of contracts. To level the playing field, Ray will change the program to group businesses based on their annual revenue. Contracts will then be targeted towards businesses based on size as well as category. In doing so, Ray will provide the greatest focus on the smallest enterprises and ensure newer and smaller MWBE’s are prepared to win contracts.

• **Increase MWBE goals to track with the recent inclusion of LGBTQ businesses.** This year, New York joined a number of U.S. cities and states in expanding the MWBE program to include LGBTQ-owned businesses. As additional businesses certify into the MWBE program, Ray will increase the city’s MWBE contracting goals in order to grow the pie for everyone.

• **Appoint a Deputy Mayor for Small, Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses.** Ensuring that every agency meets or exceeds MWBE requirements will only be possible if the program is managed by someone with the authority to hold agency heads accountable. Ray’s deputy mayor for small, minority-, and women-owned businesses will undertake a holistic review of all city contracts (including larger contracts for services like telecommunications) and franchise agreements, and identify any opportunities to extend or expand MWBE contracting and subcontracting.

**Build the most inclusive and innovative workforce training system in the world.**

A strong economy thrives on the talent of its workforce, and New York City’s talent pool has long attracted the biggest employers in the world. Ray will create a leading edge workforce training system to prepare us for the comeback and shape the future of our city’s economy.

Many New Yorkers have not only been displaced from jobs but from entire industries that are unlikely to return at the same levels. Others have been working in low-wage jobs with limited opportunity to upskill and increase opportunity. We need to invest in workforce development programs that serve communities with the greatest need, focus on in demand skills, and have a good-paying job waiting at the end.

Ray will help the 1 in 4 New Yorkers who apply to the city’s primary workforce programs each year and get rejected or referred to lower-level training because they lack basic math, reading, or English language skills. He will raise and invest $100 million a year to provide 15,000 New Yorkers with seats in bridge programs, which pair basic education with jobs training, and put these New Yorkers on the path to a good job.

Ray will also work with the non-profit and private sectors to integrate New York City’s hundreds of existing job training programs and CUNY career services into a unified NYC job training network and directory, accessible online, and use a data-driven approach to pair workers’ existing skills and interests with locally available programs, real time hiring trends, and job openings.
He will also match our workforce investments to high demand industries. For example, he will focus on preparing New Yorkers for infrastructure jobs by expanding capacity at the city's Workforce 1 Industrial Career Centers, increasing focus on industrial and construction jobs within the Career Pathways program, and leveraging programs offered by labor unions.

**Make affordable childcare available to every family, creating good childcare jobs and helping parents to reenter the workforce.**

Ray was raised by a single mother and believes that no family should have to choose between their job and taking care of their children. That's why he will ensure that every family in New York City has access to affordable childcare.

As part of his “Cradle to Career” education strategy, Ray will launch Comeback: Affordable Childcare for All — an initiative that will guarantee every parent access to quality early childcare and education for infants and toddlers. These programs will be designed to address all aspects of early childhood development, which will help all kids enter school on a level playing field and ready to succeed.

Ray’s initiative will provide operating funds and capacity building to existing programs, as well as an urgent grant program to help providers launch new programs in underserved “childcare deserts”. Ray will also partner with CUNY to provide professional development to providers, working with the QUALITYstarsNY program to ensure that every child in New York City has access to a high quality early childhood development experience.

This program will also help support childcare workers in New York City, many of whom are small business owners, and were among those most impacted by the pandemic. Investing in Comeback: Affordable Childcare for All will help increase revenue for quality local childcare providers so they can continue to grow and create more accessible jobs in our communities.

**Fix the broken property tax system so that every community pays its fair share.**

Ray will ensure all communities benefit from our economic recovery by addressing inequities in our economic system that drains resources from working New Yorkers. For example, he will fix the broken property tax system that places an unfair burden on middle class and working class homeowners, low-income renters, and small business owners in neighborhoods around the city.

The problems with our current property tax system are glaring. For example, as a result of decades of inaction by our current political leadership, low- and middle-income homeowners are forced to pay a higher percentage of their home's value in taxes compared to New Yorkers in more affluent neighborhoods. This is an issue that can especially impact Black and brown homeowners. A home worth $150,000 in Crown Heights currently has the same exact tax bill as
a home in Carroll Gardens that sold for $9,000,000. That's because our outdated property tax system does not account for the gentrification we've seen in so many neighborhoods around the city.

Ray will provide the political leadership needed to finally extend relief for low- and middle-income homeowners and renters, as well as small business owners. He'll undertake a thorough overhaul of the property tax system to make sure that every neighborhood pays only their fair share, save hard-working families thousands of dollars each year while asking wealthy property owners to pay a little more.
IN CLOSING

Ray knows that none of this will work unless we beat this pandemic and get our city up and running. That’s why Ray is currently focused on ensuring every New Yorker is vaccinated quickly and equitably, with a public education and outreach campaign that focuses especially on communities which, for understandable historical reasons, are most skeptical about government-sponsored vaccination campaigns. This requires increased flexibility in vaccine deployment, transparency in the process and regular assessments to determine who is being left behind so resources can be redeployed.

Over the coming weeks Ray will release additional components of the Comeback Plan that focus on redesigning our EDUCATION system, so it works for every child; building and preserving AFFORDABLE HOUSING; reforming the NYPD; building a RESILIENT and SUSTAINABLE city; supporting the ARTS; partnering with the FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY; and many more elements of a greater and more equitable NYC. Just focusing on one of these elements is not going to bring our city back — it will take a holistic approach — an approach that builds unlikely bridges across communities and sectors of our economy. That’s the leadership only Ray can provide.