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RECOVERY AGENDA: MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO AND TRUST FOR GOVERNORS ISLAND ANNOUNCE PLANS TO CREATE NEW HUB FOR GREEN BUSINESSES AND NON-PROFITS

RFP released to activate 23,000 SF historic building on Governors Island as home for climate-focused small businesses, entrepreneurs and non-profits

New space to create 70 good-paying jobs; advances long-term vision to make Governors Island a global center for climate solutions

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Trust for Governors Island (The Trust) today issued a request for proposals (RFP) to develop a hub for businesses and non-profits working in climate and the environment in Building 301, a historic waterfront building located on the Northern section of Governors Island. An early step in establishing Governors Island as a [leading center for climate solutions](#), this project will serve as a beta-space for new innovative technology, research and policy action within the climate and environmental fields.

The RFP released today will seek developers and operators to transform Building 301, a 23K SF historic structure, formerly used as an elementary school by the U.S. Coast Guard, into a hub for businesses, entrepreneurs and non-profits working within climate and the environment. Already home to like-minded tenants and partners like the Harbor School, Climate Museum, and Billion Oyster Project, the project will expand opportunities for businesses and non-profits to focus on new, innovative research, technology and policy action on Governors Island. The project is expected to create over 70 good paying jobs once fully constructed and operating.

“The climate crisis is already – and will continue to be – a public health crisis, too,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “It’s time to rally New York City’s scientists, innovators, and big thinkers to preserve our ability to leave safe, healthy lives by fighting climate change and adapting to an unpredictable future.”

“Establishing a hub at Governors Island to lead the world in research, design, and education about climate change and adaptation is one of the key parts of the Mayor’s COVID-19 recovery agenda, and this RFP helps us get a head start on this crucial work,” said **Deputy Mayor Vicki**

Been. “The climate crisis is a major threat to the health and well-being of New Yorkers, and our economic recovery must both bring us back from the pandemic and prepare us for such future threats to public health. The transformation of Governors Island will not only create good green jobs, but will jump start innovative strategies to avoid and mitigate the effects global warming will have on the health of our residents.”

“Governors Island is uniquely poised to become a leading center for climate action, and we’re thrilled to begin realizing this vision now by bringing small businesses and non-profits together under one roof, with opportunities to showcase their work and engage New Yorkers,” said **Clare Newman, President & CEO at the Trust for Governors Island.** “This new space will create jobs and breathe new life into a treasured historic asset, while laying the groundwork to establish Governors Island as an even greater resource for the long-term resilience of New York City.”

“Climate change is an existential crisis that impacts our way of life, the health of our communities, and our economy,” said **James Patchett, president and CEO of New York City Economic Development Corporation.** “As we continue to look towards the City’s recovery, sustainability tied to green technology and jobs will play important roles. This new hub where small businesses, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs can research, innovate, and ideate, is an important starting point that will help create a more resilient New York City for years to come.”

“As the world works to recover from COVID-19, it is clear that we must put climate and environmental justice at the heart of our actions,” said **Daniel Zarrilli, NYC’s Chief Climate Policy Advisor.** “Supporting job-creating investments in clean energy, resilient infrastructure, and environmental justice will be essential to the city’s recovery and will accelerate the creative solutions necessary to end the age of fossil fuels. We applaud the Trust for Governors Island on their commitment to a livable future for the next generation.”

“Adapting the world to climate change is a mammoth task that blends science, engineering, and design,” said **Jainey Bavishi, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Resiliency.** “This hub will create new opportunities for innovation and collaboration across sectors, critical ingredients in our work to build a safer and more resilient future.”

Today’s announcement comes one month after Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Trust unveiled plans to bring together a multi-disciplinary community of researchers, educators, advocates, innovators, and policymakers devoted to addressing the global climate crisis on Governors Island, as part of the Mayor’s [Recovery Agenda](#). Those plans and proposed rezoning of the South Island entered the formal public land use review process this week. In 2021, the Trust plans to issue a solicitation to attract an academic or research institution to anchor the center for climate solutions on Governors Island.

The complete RFP can be downloaded at govisland.org/about/rfps. Proposals may be submitted through January 2021.

“The release of a RFP for the revitalization of Building 301 marks a crucial point in Governors Island’s development into a leading center for climate solutions and action”, said **Congressman Jerry Nadler.** “Through this innovative hub, Governors Island will continue to provide valuable

resiliency projects as well as economic opportunities for New York City today and for the future.”

“We know that small businesses and not-for-profit organizations will play a significant part in driving the innovation that will be necessary to address climate change and the many interrelated environmental challenges we face,” said **State Senator Brian Kavanagh, who represents lower Manhattan, western Brooklyn and Governors Island.** “This RFP will help assess the extent to which Governors Island can serve as a site for such innovation within the confines of the island’s existing structures, even as the Trust embarks on the essential public engagement and review process for its broader vision of redeveloping a portion of the island to create a much larger amount of space for environmental work.”

“Sustainability is the key to New York City’s future,” said **Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Committee on Environmental Protection.** “It will get people back to work and deliver the environmental justice many New Yorkers deserve. We in government must find creative solutions like Building 301 to help our brightest minds and dedicated innovators deliver that future.”

“Manhattan Community Board 1 is looking forward to seeing our treasured historic buildings on Governors Island come alive and be restored as a part of the Trust’s vision for an Island that includes environmental consciousness and action,” said **Tammy Meltzer, Chairperson, Manhattan Community Board 1.**

In September 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Trust for Governors Island announced plans to bring a center for climate solutions to Governors Island as a key part of the Mayor’s Recovery Agenda. Leveraging the Island’s waterfront location and unique environment, the project will concentrate research and innovation, testing and development, and education and public engagement around innovative climate solutions in a single physical hub, bringing together a multi-disciplinary community of researchers, educators, advocates, innovators, and policymakers devoted to addressing the global climate crisis. In total, the center could encompass millions of square feet of mixed-use development to support and expand public access to Governors Island year-round, and create 8,000 direct jobs.

Over the next several months, the Trust and the Mayor’s Office will work with stakeholders, advocates, local elected officials, agencies, and New Yorkers to help bring the vision to life through a proposed rezoning of the South Island, which entered the City’s formal land use review process this week. The proposed rezoning will support a mixed-use district within development sites on the South Island, including an academic or research institution which will anchor the center for climate solutions, while protecting the Island’s park and open spaces.

For more information, visit www.govisland.org.