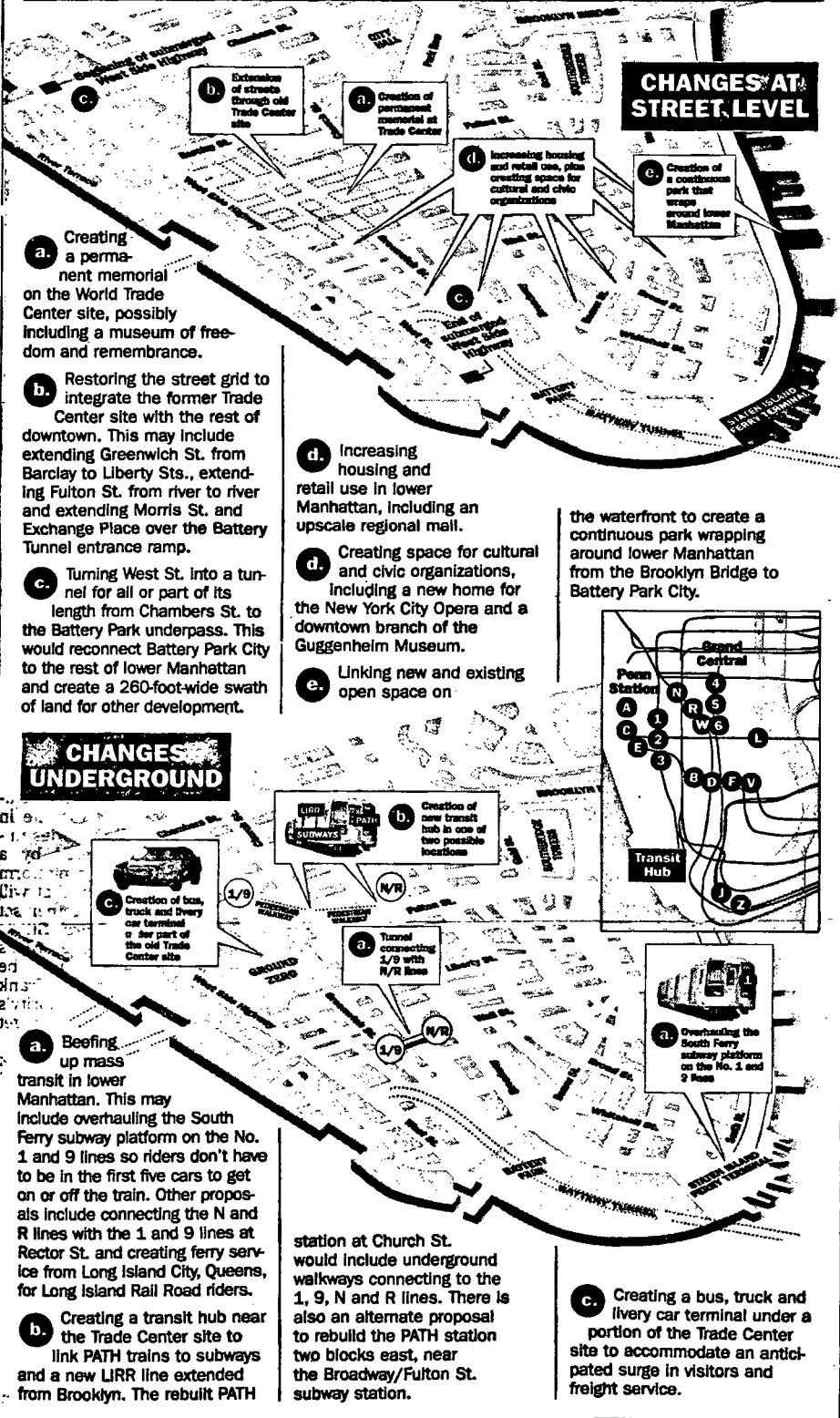


THE AFTERMATH

Rebuilding plan unveiled

MAPPING GROUND ZERO'S FUTURE

The preliminary blueprint to rebuild lower Manhattan, approved by the Lower Manhattan Development Corp. yesterday, calls for:



Transit, roads priority of downtown project

By PAUL H.B. SHIM
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

New plans for Ground Zero start with years of upgrading mass transit and roads — before the construction of buildings at the site.

A rough blueprint for the crippled area — unveiled yesterday by the Lower Manhattan Development Corp. — envisions a major transit hub with more housing and retail space than before the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Other highlights of the plan include:

- Building a memorial on the site with a museum of freedom and remembrance.
- Restoring streets eliminated in the area 35 years ago.
- Burying the southern end of the West Side Highway.

But aboveground construction would not begin until at least 2004, officials said.

They made clear yesterday that the transit hub needs to be created before major rebuilding to replace the Trade Center complex can move forward.

"Redevelopment is an extremely complicated matter," corporation chairman John Whitehead said. "In the end, the plan has to fit together like a jigsaw puzzle."

One exception will be 7 World Trade Center.

Reconstruction could begin in the fall because owner Larry Silverstein has agreed to major concessions. Most importantly, his proposed building would not dead-end Greenwich St. the way 7 World Trade used to.

The planners said they hope to link 14 downtown subway lines with PATH trains and perhaps the Long Island Rail Road.

"These are things that have to come early on because they will determine everything else," said Alexander Garvin, the chief planner.

"Our priority is to make it an easier place to get to and easier place to get around," said Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff, Mayor Bloomberg's liaison to the city-state development agency.

The panel has been under pressure to outline its goals as the excavation of the Trade Center site draws to a close, months ahead of initial expectations.

Whitehead said more specific plans should be decided on by June, though public input will be gathered for years.

But the state's economic development chief said Gov. Pataki wants faster action on at least

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Blueprints show city's on the track back

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one project. "The governor has made it clear to all of us that he wants to have a plan for the memorial park and the memorial this year," said Charles Gargano, chairman of the Empire State Development Corp.

While Garvin lauded the unprecedented level of cooperation among government agencies, others hinted at conflict ahead.

"The plan has to fit together like a jigsaw puzzle."

JOHN WHITEHEAD

A senior official of the Port Authority, which owns the Trade Center site, argued privately that many streets should be limited to pedestrians because vehicles would interfere with the millions of tourists expected at the memorial each year. "You're going to have a tremendous amount of pedestrians coming by car, by train, by ferry who have nothing to do with the people [who work] here," the official said.

Mayor names 4 to panel

Bloomberg announced four appointments to the agency yesterday: Stanley O'Neal, president of Merrill Lynch; Sally Hernandez-Pinero, a former deputy mayor under Mayor David Dinkins; Billie Tsien, an architect, and Carl Weisbrod, president of the Alliance for Downtown New York.

Bloomberg bristled when asked whether the choice of O'Neal created a conflict of interest, since Merrill Lynch owns 20% of Bloomberg L.P., the mayor's multibillion-dollar financial information company. "Stan O'Neal is a quality human being [who] was appointed because he can really help the people of New York," the mayor said. "There is nothing to do with the fact that Merrill Lynch owns 20% of Bloomberg. Period."

He also defended his decision not to appoint relatives of Sept. 11 victims. "What I tried to do was to pick people who had the skills that they needed for the general development," he said.

With Greg Gittlich