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CITY COUNCIL HEARING ON COLUMBUS CIRCLE
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Good morning Madam Chairperson. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Land Use Committee to discuss Columbus Circle. I am Michael Carey, First Executive Vice President and General Counsel for the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC).

As part of Mayor Giuliani's overall effort to revitalize the Columbus Circle area, EDC issued an RFP for 2 Columbus Circle, in July, 1996. The goal of the RFP was to dispose of the property to a private developer in a way that complements other development at Columbus Circle.

The RFP contained design guidelines, and mandated that, "the project must be compatible with the community." It detailed several development criteria including: total economic benefit to the City, development team qualifications, financial feasibility, design and relationship to the surrounding community. Seven responses were received, all but one planned to reuse the existing building. The respondents offered a wide variety of proposals, ranging from residential and hotel uses, to a museum, television studios, convention/exhibition space, a cultural complex

and a jazz club. EDC has developed a short list of three proposals -- a condominium hotel with a public restaurant, a condominium with entertainment and retail, and a museum.

In order to share information and receive input on the uses and design features of various proposals, EDC has had two meetings with representatives of Community Boards 4, 5 and 7 (the Tri-board). At the first meeting, in January 1997, EDC presented both preliminary sketches and information on the uses planned for each proposal. In response to comments received at that meeting, EDC issued additional design guidelines to all respondents, emphasizing that the facade of the building must be compatible and consistent with other buildings along Central Park. In November 1997, EDC once again reached out to the Tri-board and met to update them on the status of the project. Both meetings provided EDC with the opportunity to hear the concerns of the Columbus Circle community. EDC has encouraged the Tri-Board to keep in touch; we have agreed to meet with them again as the project progresses, and will readily discuss any issues, or answer their questions about the project. In addition, EDC met with the Municipal Arts Society to discuss the designs of the various proposals.

EDC recognizes that development around Columbus Circle must be a coordinated effort, sensitive to the needs of those who live and work in the community, as well as the needs of the potential users of the property. To that end, a decision on the Coliseum must be reached before EDC moves forward on the 2 Columbus Circle project. Issues such as vehicular access, pedestrian access, building massing, and other aspects of the development's relationship to the surrounding area are important factors which must be taken into account.

The redevelopment of 2 Columbus Circle is an important project for New York City. The site is

one of the highest profile sites in the City, if not the world. The Administration's goal for the Columbus Circle area is a comprehensive solution that meets the needs of the community, the City and the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify here today. I will now answer any questions you may have.