

Bloomberg deserves re-election

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CRAIN'S ENDORSES Mayor Michael Bloomberg for re-election because New York is a far better place than it was when he became mayor four years ago. The decision is easy, because Democratic nominee Fernando Ferrer has for the most part failed to make clear what he would do differently, and the policies he has spelled out would be harmful to the city.

Three of the mayor's accomplishments stand out. The most striking is the continued drop in crime, down 20% during his tenure, even as the police force has been trimmed and 1,000 officers have been reassigned to anti-terrorism duty. New York's being safe again is the fundamental reason behind the revitalization of neighborhoods outside of Manhattan.

The mayor has also helped right the economy. Mr. Bloomberg took office when the city was falling into a severe recession. The troubles were primarily due to the end of the technology boom and were exacerbated by Sept. 11. City Hall doesn't control the economy, but business leaders' confidence in the mayor helps determine whether they invest in the city. Witness the large institutions that are putting money into real estate and the chief executives who are keeping their companies headquartered here. If the national economy doesn't falter, New York could gain more than 50,000 jobs annually in the coming years.

The Bloomberg administration has laid the groundwork for future growth, an accomplishment obscured by his losing battle for the West Side stadium. In the post-war era, the

city reached 3.8 million jobs three different times, only to falter because Manhattan's business districts couldn't accommodate more workers. The last time the city hit the high-water mark in jobs, Wall Street firms made plans to move thousands of employees across the river to New Jersey. The next time, the West Side will be ready to welcome them because of the rezoning of that area, the most underutilized tract in Manhattan.

In Brooklyn, meanwhile, the Greenpoint-Williamsburg area will become the next great residential neighborhood as a result of a new plan allowing the construction of 10,000

The mayor has laid foundation for growth in the future

housing units. If the real estate market maintains its strength, money will be available to build as many as a third of the units for the middle class.

Mr. Bloomberg has made other gains during his tenure, including improving

the public school system and avoiding divisive clashes. His performance in office would make it difficult to embrace any challenger, but it is particularly hard to determine exactly what Mr. Ferrer would do as mayor.

His most consistent theme is that the city has become too expensive for average New Yorkers. There is truth in that, but his solutions seem to be government subsidies, which benefit the few and raise costs for everyone else. Mr. Ferrer would block the entry of nonunion retailers like Wal-Mart, even though they would bring lower prices and force competitors to cut theirs. That's a policy for a less affordable New York. Mr. Bloomberg is clearly the right choice on Nov. 8.

REBOUND IN EMPLOYMENT

New York City jobs, in thousands.

2001	3,692.1
2002	3,583.5
2003	3,531.7
2004	3,541.7
2005*	3,590.0

* Estimated.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Getting teachers to leave home

HOW TO PUT TEACHERS WHERE THEY'RE NEEDED

THE OCT. 10 editorial, "Bloomberg's school reforms," was right to point out that experienced New York City school teachers are transferring to the best-performing schools. However, in a recently published study (*Contemporary Economic Policy*, 23(4), 2005), I show that location choice goes beyond moving to high-performing schools.

I find that experienced teachers are moving because of both the quality of the school's neighborhood and its distance to their homes. Because a large fraction of teachers live either in the suburbs or close to the suburban borders, more experienced teachers have gravitated to schools that are closer to the edges of the city. Who wouldn't prefer to work

closer to home?

In short, a labor contract should be designed to pay experienced, high-quality teachers to go to schools where they are most needed, but also take into account that New York City contains vast geographic, demographic and economic differences. Compensation of teachers should be designed to encourage high-quality teachers to live in the neighborhoods of the schools that need them so badly.

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GARDEN'S MISSION EXTENDS WELL BEYOND RESEARCH

BROOKLYN BOTANIC Garden would like to clarify a point in

Crain's Oct. 10 story.

It is not true that BBG was once focused solely on scientific research and is now looking to broaden its appeal. While BBG has a rich heritage and legacy in scientific research, in fact, its mission, dating from its inception in 1910, was conceived to extend beyond research. The founding mission comprises three core components—horticulture, education and science—emphasized equally, an approach that was visionary for a botanic

garden in the early 1900s and remains integral to the institutional vision today.

BBG is a 52-acre living museum where beauty, romance and fun blossom in the world-class plant collections and specialty gardens. Admired as an urban horticultural and botanical resource, it inspires visitors to discover that plants are essential to life.

EARL D. WEINER
Chairman
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