

After Tragedy - The Renaissance of New York

Prior to September 11, 2001, the 16-acre World Trade Center site was one of New York City's most familiar landmarks. Following the tragedy, workers spent months clearing the debris and remains of those who died in the attacks. On May 30, 2002, the last remaining piece of structural steel, which had come from the South Tower, was ceremoniously draped with the U.S. flag and carried out. This piece of steel has been recycled as the bow of the new assault ship, USS New York. In addition, Honeybee Robotics incorporated steel debris from the site into cable shields built for the Mars Exploration Rover mission.

The main developer of the new World Trade Center site, Larry Silverstein, heads the group of visionary leaders committed to the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site. Plans include six acres of space, five new skyscrapers, the National September 11 Memorial and Museum, a retail complex, and a performing arts center. When completed they believe it will create a more vibrant future for downtown New York with superior commercialized space, a more convenient transportation system, and a highly commemorative destination for people who live, work, and visit the area.

By 2012, completion of the five World Trade Center office towers will mark a major milestone in the project. Together, with the recently opened 7 World Trade Center to the north of the site and the rising Goldman Sachs global headquarters to the west in Battery City Park, the downtown skyline will feature no fewer than seven new corporate towers comprising 14 million square feet of office space. An architectural landmark for New York City, 1 World Trade Center, the Freedom Tower, will soar 1,776 feet, symbolic of the year 1776, when the Declaration of Independence was signed. The Freedom Tower will become the tallest building in the United States and include office space, an observation deck, world-class restaurants, and more. The tower is scheduled to open in 2011.

The National September 11 Memorial and Museum will serve as a moving and important memorial to the 2,979 people who perished in the 9/11 attacks. It will also serve as a poignant learning experience for student group travelers. The memorial's design, Reflecting Absence, will consist of two voids on the footprints of the original Twin Towers. Surrounded by a landscaped plaza filled with oak trees, each void will feature rings of cascading water falling into illuminated reflecting pools. The names of the victims in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania, as well as the February 1993 WTC bombing, will be inscribed around the memorial waterfalls.

A state-of-the-art museum will offer student group travelers the opportunity to enhance their experience. Visits will begin at an entry pavilion, as students encounter both the enormity of the loss and the triumph of the human spirit that are at the heart of 9/11. Students will also be able to view a section of the massive slurry wall that held back the Hudson River during the attacks. Construction on the memorial and museum began in March 2006. The memorial is scheduled to open Sept. 11, 2009, with the museum opening to follow in 2010. To date, the September 11 Memorial and Museum has raised more than \$300 million of its \$350 million goal.

In addition to the Memorial Museum, the cultural component of the new World Trade Center will include a 1,000-seat performing arts center at the northwest corner of Fulton and Greenwich Streets. The modern-dance focused Joyce Theater will be the sole occupant of the center. Although the theater will have the performing arts focus, the building may occasionally be used for non-dance events, such as the Tribeca Film Festival, which takes place each spring. Construction for the project will not begin until 2010 or 2011.

The retail area, occupying 500,000 square feet, will be interspersed throughout the site, stretching from as far as the new Fulton Street Transit Center to the World Financial Center. Developed by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, with support from Silverstein Properties, the retail space is expected to be completed by 2012. When completed, the site will be one of the largest business districts in the United States.

More than 5.6 million visitors traveled to Lower Manhattan in 2006. They came to visit the World Trade Center site and to reflect on the tragic events of September 11, 2001. According to the Downtown Alliance, the downtown business improvement district, that's only half of those expected to head downtown once the National September 11 Memorial and Museum opens in 2010.

About the Author

[travel adventures](#) Travel Adventures is a student tour provider staffed by educators who understand the needs of teachers. It has served over one half million students since 1987 and its mission is to "empower teachers to create change by expanding the classroom to the world."

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