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**FINANCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR
“MAKE WAY FOR LOWER MANHATTAN”**

With “Slow Streets” Pilot Implementation Starting Earth Day 2019

Financial District, NY – Today the Financial District Neighborhood Association (FDNA) released *Make Way for Lower Manhattan*. This community-based multi-year report built on prior studies to provide a vision to transform New York City’s first and most historic neighborhood. It is a call to action for safer and cleaner streets for all who live, work and visit here. To download a PDF of the plan, visit our website at www.FiDiNewYork.org.

The old, Colonial streets and sidewalks of Manhattan’s Financial District have become far too crowded with different obstacles, largely due to the ongoing conversion of skyscrapers to residential use and new construction of large residential buildings, coupled with the dramatic growth of downtown tourism. Piles of garbage cover many sidewalks, creating health hazards and pushing pedestrians into already crowded streets. Construction scaffolding and street vendors block sidewalks everywhere. Loading zones sit adjacent to primary schools’ streets, and congestion slows down emergency vehicles. Pedestrians and cyclists jostle with cars for space on streets and sidewalks – to which a recent spate of fatalities and accidents attests.

“Now is the time for implementing *Make Way for Lower Manhattan*,” said **Patrick Kennell, President of the Financial District Neighborhood Association**. “We urge that funds already allocated to NYC Department of Transportation (DOT) be used for this pilot project to test some of the ideas that have worked in other cities, identified in both a 2010 DOT study and again today in the *Make Way for Lower Manhattan* vision – including improved walking corridors, targeted sanitation interventions, slow street zones, and pedestrian-safe plazas. And we urge that this pilot starts immediately this spring, to alleviate problems this summer and beyond.”

Lower Manhattan’s growth as a financial capital and commercial center in the late 19th and early 20th centuries gave rise to towering skyscrapers on narrow and winding colonial streets – streets one-third as wide, with sidewalks half as wide, as east-west cross streets in the gridded portion of Manhattan above Houston Street. As far back as 1966, the City Planning Commission recognized that a new approach to managing these streets would be needed to accommodate the returning residential population – but it was never implemented. Responding to this need, in 2010 NYC DOT undertook a “Shared-Street Study” which recommended a pilot project in which street real estate would be shared more equitably between cars and people. Since then, the Lower Manhattan community has urged its elected and government leaders for action and, in 2016, Council Member Chin secured \$500,000 in the NYC DOT budget to identify solutions to the area’s mobility challenges.

“Lower Manhattan has evolved over the years to become a growing residential neighborhood that has retained its vital role as a commercial and tourist center. With its unique colonial-era street grid, including narrow streets and sidewalks, this increasingly

congested area deserves more than just a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to essential city services like sanitation and street management. I look forward to working collaboratively with the community, city agencies and others to apply fresh ideas to create the pedestrian-friendly neighborhood that we all deserve,” said **Councilwoman Margaret Chin**.

“The Financial District is the birthplace of our nation and must be cherished. But it continues to evolve now with a wider range of businesses and increased tourism, and it is also home to families. To serve all these needs, CB1 works hard on addressing the impact of change and development and seeks to partner with FDNA to affect real solutions. We celebrate their leadership and drive,” said **Community Board Chairman Anthony Notaro**.

Shared-street districts now successfully exist in many of Europe’s historic capitals – including Dublin, Amsterdam, London, Istanbul, Paris and Barcelona. Typically, low speeds permit cars and people to access streets simultaneously, street parking is limited, and access for deliveries and cargo-loading is scheduled for specified times of day.

“Making our streets safer and cleaner as envisioned by *Make Way for Lower Manhattan* would improve business through increased efficiency of delivery of goods, make the streets more welcoming to customers and visitors, and make the streets safer for our children,” said **local small-business owners Claudio and Linda Marini of Da Claudio Ristorante**, a popular Italian neighborhood restaurant on Ann Street.

"Speaking as a pizzeria business owner that does a high-volume delivery with bikes, cleaner, more organized streets would definitely benefit everyone. Not only my delivery employees but also the countless tourists that come in scratching their heads asking for directions. Most of which are within a couple blocks. We recently opened this location and I can already say all the walking detours because of the construction, cranes and work trucks is an inconvenience. I understand the businesses need ways to receive and send deliveries but there has to be a more effective way," said **Joey (Pino) Vitale whose grandfather Pino started, [Joe's Pizza](#)**, the iconic Greenwich Village pizzeria which often has lines out of its doors onto Nassau and Fulton Streets.

Make Way for Lower Manhattan was developed by BuroHappold in conjunction with WXY, Massengale & Co., Sam Schwartz Engineering and Publica, and supported by the Kaplan Fund and Carmel Partners. It began as a “problem statement” to spark a conversation to improve the streets and sidewalks of the Financial District. Today, FDNA takes that “problem statement” and demands action from the City of New York.

FDNA thanks our many elected officials who have supported *Make Way for Lower Manhattan* before, including NYC Council Member Margaret Chin, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, New York State Assembly Member Yuh-Line Niou and Assembly Member Deborah Glick, and Congressman Jerry Nadler.

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