

**FINANCIAL DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**  
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**Manhattan Borough Board**  
**Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer's**  
**Hearing on Mayor's Preliminary FY18 Budget**

**Testimony by Amanda Timchak, Board Member**  
**Financial District Neighborhood Association**

**CUNY's Guttman Community College**  
**50 West 40th Street, New York, New York**  
**Wednesday, February 15, 4:00 pm**

Thank you Borough President Gale Brewer and members of the Manhattan Borough Board for holding this important public hearing today and inviting our testimony. My name is Amanda Timchak and I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Financial District Neighborhood Association, a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to improve the quality of life in the Financial District in Manhattan's Community Board 1.

Vehicular and pedestrian congestion is a major quality of life and safety issue for those that live, work and visit our neighborhood. We have a major problem with placard parking, both legal and illegal, of all kinds. Vehicular congestion is compounded by the sheer number of double-decker tour buses, personal vehicles and commuter buses that fill our streets. This congestion leads to critical issues such as emergency vehicles being impeded by blocked streets, resulting in a dangerous increase in response times.

A Streetscape Study of Lower Manhattan prepared by the CB1 Community Planning Fellow, in May of 2016, cataloged a total of 3,039 sidewalk features on Financial District sidewalks, including benches, bike racks, fire hydrants, etc. – almost as many features as the streets of Seaport, Tribeca, and Battery Park City combined.

Lower Manhattan has retained its historic colonial street plan, rather than the traditional New York City grid. The colonial grid was designed at a time of dramatically lower density, and was not built to be flooded with cars, trucks and buses as we see today. Combined with approximately 15 million tourists annually, hundreds of thousands of workers and over 65,000 permanent residents, this makes mobility an inherent problem. A Pedestrian Survey conducted by Community Board 1 in 2015 in conjunction with Pace University and the City College of New York shows that a most respondents identified “overcrowded sidewalks” and “overcrowded streets” as the top two serious problems in our district.

A multitude of factors impede pedestrian mobility in Lower Manhattan. High density buildings stack garbage onto narrow sidewalks, commercial vehicles park on the sidewalk, outdated and cumbersome security infrastructure is scattered through the district, commercial delivery trucks, service vehicles, construction and sidewalk sheds all obstruct the sidewalk. These factors often dangerously force pedestrians into the street, leaving vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians in conflict over the same narrow, shared space. Recently a senior citizen was killed near the Staten Island Ferry and a Millennium High School student was struck by a taxi driver.

CB1 has repeatedly made budget requests for construction and traffic mitigation, and for a plan to improve the streetscape of Lower Manhattan for greater pedestrian flow. In connection with the Fiscal Year 2017 Executive Budget, CB1 requested that the City take a proactive, holistic approach to managing traffic and pedestrian flow in Lower Manhattan and dedicate funding for a modeling study to establish the conditions on the street and sidewalk, and to implement a framework for managed streets in Lower Manhattan. These requests have fallen on deaf ears.

We understand that the NYC Department of Transportation completed the framework for such a study in 2011 and now needs funding to update their numbers and incorporate garbage pickup and commercial freight delivery metrics into their analysis. We understand that less than \$1MM is required to complete this benchmark analysis, so that we can begin working toward a better and safer future.

We commend the Mayor and Borough President for their commitment to Vision Zero and the allocation of an additional \$317 million in capital funds for FY18-FY23 to fund new investments to reduce pedestrian fatalities, including pedestrian and traffic safety street reconstruction projects, signal improvements and street lighting at intersections.

We join with CB1 and over 650 of our Lower Manhattan neighbors that have signed our petition requesting a pedestrian traffic safety study. The problems facing Lower Manhattan are unique, and should be managed uniquely, but we can't begin to offer solutions until we can measure the problem. We respectfully ask that the FY18 Budget include a special allocation to complete this long-overdue benchmark analysis.

Thank you for your consideration.

# Funding Request for Lower Manhattan Pedestrian Traffic Safety and Mobility Study

Manhattan Petition by Paul Proulx



With a street grid from the Dutch settlement and Colonial era, overlaid with modern residential high rises and a 24/7 live-work community, Lower Manhattan faces unique challenges from car, bus and truck traffic, garbage collection, and pedestrian and tourist flows. Manhattan's Community Board 1 has the fourth worst air quality of the City's 59 community boards and roughly 75 major construction projects currently taking place. Security infrastructure and enormous piles of trash bags and recycling crowd Lower Manhattan's narrow, congested sidewalks. We call on our elected officials to undertake a comprehensive survey and action plan to measure and mitigate these unique stressors on our neighborhood's quality of life and create a more livable,

662 OF 1,000 NEEDED SIGNATURES



Your letter will be emailed to: (see recipients)

LAST UPDATED **2/14/17**

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walkable Lower Manhattan.

Our request is consistent with the City's Vision Zero plan and is especially urgent after the recent tragic case of an MTA bus hitting and killing a woman near the Staten Island Ferry Terminal at State and Water streets in the Financial District on October 22, 2016. It is also consistent with the Manhattan Community Board 1 position: CB1 unanimously passed a resolution on June 28, 2016 requesting that the NYC Department of Transportation review the increased congestion due to the tripling of residential population since 9/11 and tripling of annual tourists to 15 million.

It is time for the City to take a proactive, holistic approach to managing traffic and pedestrian flow in the historic street grid of Lower Manhattan. We support CB1's request that the City dedicate funding for a modeling study to establish conditions on the street and sidewalk, and implement a framework for managed streets and traffic improvements in Lower Manhattan. The problems facing Lower Manhattan are unique, and require unique solutions.

Please join us in requesting public funding to develop solutions for these problems.

For background, please see these links:

MOBILITY-STUDY&TITLE=SIGN  
THE PETITION FUNDING  
REQUEST FOR LOWER  
MANHATTAN PEDESTRIAN  
TRAFFIC SAFETY AND MOBILITY

STUDY) 

([HTTP://TWITTER.COM/INTENT/TWEET?STATUS=SIGN THE PETITION FUNDING REQUEST FOR LOWER MANHATTAN PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC SAFETY AND MOBILITY STUDY+HTTPS://CAMPAIGNS.TRANSALT.ORG/PETITION/LOWER-MANHATTAN-MOBILITY-STUDY](http://twitter.com/intent/tweet?status=SIGN%20THE%20PETITION%20FUNDING%20REQUEST%20FOR%20LOWER%20MANHATTAN%20PEDESTRIAN%20TRAFFIC%20SAFETY%20AND%20MOBILITY%20STUDY+HTTPS://CAMPAIGNS.TRANSALT.ORG/PETITION/LOWER-MANHATTAN-MOBILITY-STUDY))

THIS PETITION RECENTLY SIGNED

BY:

STEFAN Z. OF MANHATTAN

TIMOTHY C. OF MANHATTAN

MILDA D. OF MANHATTAN

COLLEEN C. OF MANHATTAN

CECILE H. OF MANHATTAN

Continued Call for Funding for a Comprehensive Traffic and Street Mobility Study in Lower Manhattan – Manhattan’s Community Board 1, June 28, 2016 Resolution: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/downloads/pdf/Resolutions/16-06-28.pdf> (<http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/downloads/pdf/Resolutions/16-06-28.pdf>), pages 12-14/41

New York City Council Fiscal Year 2017 Executive Budget Hearing Transportation Testimony: [http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/downloads/pdf/Testimonies/Exec%20Budget\\_T...](http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/downloads/pdf/Testimonies/Exec%20Budget_T...) ([http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/downloads/pdf/Testimonies/Exec%20Budget\\_Transportation\\_5%2024%202016.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb1/downloads/pdf/Testimonies/Exec%20Budget_Transportation_5%2024%202016.pdf))

CBS Coverage of Pedestrian Death: <http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/10/22/bus-driver-charged-after-dragging...> (<http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/10/22/bus-driver-charged-after-dragging-woman/>)

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**This petition will be delivered to:**

Manhattan Community Board 1, Council Member Margaret Chin, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Public Advocate Letitia James, NYS Senator Squadron, Assembly Member Niou

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