



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

Catherine McVay Hughes CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

**New York City Public Design Commission
Water Street Streetscape Improvement Project
City Hall, Third Floor, New York, NY
Monday, December 7, 2015 at 11:30 a.m.**

Thank you, members of the Public Design Commission, for inviting our testimony today on the Water Street Streetscape Improvement Project for the installation of streetscape improvements and the rehabilitation of a plaza on Water Street between Whitehall Street, Hanover Square and Coenties Slip.

My name is Catherine McVay Hughes, and I represent Community District 1 in Lower Manhattan where I am Chair of Community Board 1 (CB1). Community District 1 includes most of Manhattan below Canal Street and south of the Brooklyn Bridge, as well as Ellis Island, Governors Island and Liberty Island. The Water Street project is wholly within the boundary of our District.

The New York City Economic Development Corporation's design consultant presented preliminary plans to CB1's Planning Committee on November 9, 2015 for the proposed Water Street improvements that seek to enhance the identity of the Water Street commercial corridor as a pedestrian-oriented environment through landscaping, improving pedestrian safety, and incorporating design elements that encourage people to walk along its length.

The scope of work includes intersection improvements and traditional streetscape elements such as curb extensions, bump-outs, benches, street trees, and planters. The work also includes the creation of public plazas at Whitehall Street and Coenties Slip.

Community Board 1 has supported the concept of this project as a collaborative effort between the Economic Development Corporation and the Downtown Alliance as part of a wider reconstruction of Water Street. This project has major implications for a master plan that will produce a gateway to Lower Manhattan connecting South Ferry up to the South Street Seaport. It is wide enough to incorporate a bike path and it must do so to make it a complete street design.

Community Board 1 recommends that the Economic Development Corporation and the Public Design Commission consider the following concerns of Community Board 1 in the preparation of a final Water Street Streetscape Improvement project:

1. Provision should be made for bike paths on Water Street as part of the City's public transit system
2. Maximum water mitigation and resiliency measures should be incorporated into the final plan
3. A plan to improve traffic flow should be developed for the surrounding area
4. City, State and Federal agency placard parking should be permanently banned from Water Street.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning on this important project on behalf of Community Board 1.