

Testimony of Charles Maikish Executive Director
Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center
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**Before the Assembly Standing Committee on Corporations, Authorities
and Commissions**

Good morning. My name is Charles Maikish and I am the Executive Director of the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center. Thank you Speaker Silver and Chair Brodsky for the opportunity to speak today about the status of Lower Manhattan development and the role of the Command Center.

The Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center was created by joint executive orders of Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg in late 2004. The Command Center, which became operational in the spring of 2005, has as its primary responsibility, the coordination of all construction projects in Lower Manhattan, south of Canal Street, river-to river as well as any construction involving city or state streets or highways.

To that end, the Command Center is currently involved in overseeing and coordinating more than 50 projects in Lower Manhattan. The value of construction now underway, or about to begin, totals \$10 billion, with over \$20 billion to be invested over the next five years. Some of the projects included in this number are the \$3.5 billion in transportation projects like the PATH, South Ferry and Fulton Transit Hub, the \$2.4 billion Goldman Sachs headquarters, several large residential projects, road and city infrastructure reconstruction, utility relocation and renewal and various projects on the World Trade Center site itself.

In sheer size, the reconstruction of Lower Manhattan is a monumental task. We estimate that over the next five years, this effort will require 1.5 million cubic yards of concrete and 350,000 tons of steel all of which will be brought in on 400,000

trucks and put in place by an estimated 10,000 construction workers over the course of a five year period.

These numbers pose extraordinary logistical challenges to the construction industry and the need to coordinate these activities to reduce any potential impact on the Lower Manhattan community. The Command Center is working closely with the construction industry in several areas. We must ensure that there will be adequate capacity in the supply chains of critical materials and that those materials will be staged in the most efficient and least disruptive manner. This must be done in a way that minimizes the impact on the residential and business communities in Lower Manhattan.

Construction at the World Trade Center Site poses unique logistical challenges not only because of the immense scale of the projects, but also because of the close proximity of projects and the overlapping project boundaries. The Command Center is working with all project sponsors and stakeholders, including the Port Authority, LMDC, the Memorial Foundation, Silverstein Properties, State DOT, the MTA, the Battery Park City Authority, city agencies and private utility companies, to coordinate site access, to facilitate appropriate reviews with City agencies and others, to resolve disputes and to facilitate construction progress at the site. At this time, the schedules for the various projects are both reasonable and achievable.

Given the vast scope of work planned for the next five years, a critical role of the Command Center will be in both traffic management and in assuring the coordination between the agencies with regulatory authority. To this end, we expect a fall launch of an Enforcement Task Force which will be comprised of representatives from the city's Department of Transportation, Police Department, Department of Buildings and others. Under the direction of the Command Center's City Operations Director, the Enforcement Task Force will meet on a daily basis to review pending permits, identify problem areas and to deploy enforcement personnel to those areas, as needed. This Task Force will be given a core force of

agents to resolve day-to-day issues. If it is determined that additional enforcement personnel is required to support the activities of specific projects, the sponsors of those projects will be asked to fund that effort.

We are currently working with the Department of Transportation in the design of an Intelligent Transportation System for Lower Manhattan. Using the latest technologies, this system will provide the Enforcement Task Force with real-time information on traffic conditions so that problems can be resolved expeditiously to reduce negative impacts on the community.

When it comes to the coordination of construction, we have adopted a slogan for the Command Center: “facilitate, mitigate and communicate.” As part of the mitigation effort, the Command Center has an environmental compliance program. Through an air quality monitoring program, we have been collecting background air quality data since the fall of 2005. As the amount of construction increases, this data will assist us in determining if construction-related activities are causing elevated concentrations of particulate matter in nearby neighborhoods. If this occurs, we will look to identify what construction-related measures can be employed to minimize such impacts. This effort, coupled with the commitment by the federally funded project sponsors, to adhere to environmental performance commitments, are very important to protecting the Lower Manhattan community.

An important component of our work is the outreach to Lower Manhattan stakeholders. Through our Community Relations Department, we do extensive public outreach to the Lower Manhattan community including residents, businesses, community groups, government agencies and elected officials regarding Lower Manhattan construction. As the reconstruction and revitalization of Lower Manhattan move forward, we understand that it is imperative that all stakeholders, as well as the general public, be informed about the progress of the work taking place in and around their neighborhoods

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we have worked closely with your office on several projects, including the Beekman Tower project, and we are utilizing the provisions of the Lower Manhattan Coordinated Construction Act, legislation you were instrumental in getting passed in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, Chair Brodsky, we have an enormous task before us that will require the continued hard work of many of the agencies represented here today. We know that the road to accomplish this unprecedented level of development will not always be a smooth one. I continue to be impressed by the commitment and resilience of the Lower Manhattan community. Working together, I believe we can reach our goals in the timeframes that have been set before us.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.