



Daily News  
02/21/2006

"Ground  
Zero's No. 1"

For more information, visit  
[www.LowerManhattan.info](http://www.LowerManhattan.info)

## Ground Zero's No. 1

BY PAUL D. COLFORD  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Lower Manhattan's \$10 billion man has taken charge.

His name is Charles Maikish, and his title is executive director of the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center.

In plain language, that means he has to make sure an army of up to 15,000 hardhats with hundreds of pieces of heavy equipment at dozens of sites south of Canal St. stay out of each other's way as they rebuild lower Manhattan.

That's \$10 billion in construction over the next few years, including Ground Zero.

"The challenge within the challenge will be the World Trade Center site," Maikish said.

Construction there will include the WTC Memorial and the WTC Memorial Museum, starting next month, and two office towers.

The Port Authority, now building a permanent PATH station, also will excavate several other WTC acres for still more construction.

Maikish, both an engineer and a lawyer, will serve as traffic cop and referee for the workers and heavy machines crisscrossing the 16 hallowed acres and most of the rest of lower Manhattan.

There are already 35 construction sites in the neighborhood, and 15 more are expected to break ground by year's end.

"At the height of construction activity downtown - in 2007 and 2008 - we expect there will be 12,000 to 15,000 hardhats a day working south of Canal St.," Maikish said.

The key for Maikish, who was appointed by Gov. Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg a year ago, is to stay in contact with the builders and agencies behind all that manpower and machinery to make sure they don't get at cross purposes.

He will do that from the Construction Command Center at 1 Liberty Plaza, where a staff of 13 is already on the job. It will grow to 22 by the end of this year and eventually to 80 or more.

Maikish, 59, who joined the new agency from JPMorgan Chase, previously had been the Port Authority's director in charge of the twin towers during the 1993 bombing and reconstruction.

"Charles is someone people respect because he's been a player in lower Manhattan for a long time," said Paul Goldstein, district manager of downtown's Community Board 1.

"Charles also has the ear of the governor, which is helpful," Goldstein added.