Dear Fellow New Yorker:

In the ever changing landscape of the City we love, the Hudson Square neighborhood has arrived. Manhattan’s former printing district was for decades a part of and yet apart from its neighbors, SoHo, the Village and Tribeca. Today, Hudson Square’s majestic art deco industrial buildings are a magnet for creative companies from around the City and around the world. Dozens of professionals in media & communications, graphic arts & architecture, design & high end e-tailing have flocked to this new mecca for innovation. But a collection of buildings only becomes a true neighborhood when the streets and sidewalks – the connective tissue of urban areas – become an integral part of our daily experience. And so, we invite you to envision the not-too-distant future described in our brochure Hudson Square Is Now: A Streetscape Plan for Hudson Square.

For the past two years, the Hudson Square Connection, the area’s Business Improvement District, has been working with our world class planning team and scores of local stakeholders to bring the creativity that’s in our buildings out into our public spaces. The location of the Holland Tunnel in the southern part of our district and our legacy as an industrial neighborhood present challenges for a place that has seen no significant infrastructure upgrades in over 80 years. At the same time, Hudson Square has a vibe and an intimacy that we want to preserve. So we’ve set out to reclaim our public spaces for people to make Hudson Square a socially, environmentally and economically connected neighborhood.

The plan is conceived of as a public-private partnership. As the agent for the business community, we’re already marshalling the private resources needed to make Hudson Square a greener and more human neighborhood. More than just a plan, this brochure is really a blueprint for the next five years. Starting...now.

Best,
Ellen Baer
President
Hudson Square is an authentic Manhattan neighborhood where people work, live, play and visit. There is a palpable energy on the streets from the creative businesses that call this neighborhood “home.” The five distinct initiatives of our Streetscape Improvement Plan will further Hudson Square’s transformation while celebrating its rich history and creative culture.

Hudson Square Connection
Fall 2012
Hudson Square is now

Making places for everyone

Hudson Square, nestled among Greenwich Village, SoHo and Tribeca, is an authentic Manhattan neighborhood where people work, live, play and visit. Over the years, the former printing district, with its distinctive architecture, has transformed into a vibrant hub for the innovation economy. You can feel a palpable energy on the streets from the creative businesses that call this neighborhood “home.” Since its formation in 2009, the Hudson Square Connection has been the voice of the neighborhood. Now, we are implementing an ambitious five-year Streetscape Improvement Plan that will further Hudson Square’s transformation while celebrating its rich history and creative culture.

This is Hudson Square:

1. SPRING ST.

2. SOHO SQUARE

3. VARICK ST.

4. HUDSON ST.

5. THE NEIGHBORHOOD
Hudson Square is enduring

The neighborhood yesterday

In 1705, Queen Anne granted the land, now known as Hudson Square, to Trinity Church. Since then, Hudson Square has transformed from farmland to a working-class neighborhood to an industrial center to today’s creative hub. The neighborhood’s most enduring characteristics are its industrial buildings and transportation infrastructure.

1750s: Trinity Church Farm
By the mid-1800s farmland had developed amid the marshes.

1920s: Sixth Avenue
Excavation for the Sixth Avenue subway cut through existing urban blocks.

1920s: Pier 35–38
Proximity to the river fostered warehouses, industry and traffic.

and today

Hudson Square is a vibrant Lower West Side neighborhood located a block from the Hudson River in Manhattan. In recent years, creative businesses of all kinds have moved to Hudson Square. The neighborhood is home to more than 1,000 businesses. Over 50,000 workers, students and visitors walk its streets every day.

Hudson Square is characterized by large well-constructed industrial loft buildings. The emblematic architecture, with its open floor plans and sunlit spaces, lends itself to adaptive reuse and innovative collaborations, making Hudson Square the ideal setting in which creative businesses can thrive.

As more and more businesses come to Hudson Square, we are cognizant of the need to transform our environs to create a rich and vibrant streetscape that is reflective of our new tenants. Our Plan applies the successful principles of adaptive reuse to public spaces to create a pedestrian culture that reinforces the neighborhood’s identity.

Hudson Square by the numbers

26 blocks of loft buildings with high-lot coverage

9.5 million square feet of commercial space

50,000 people during the daytime

2,500 residents

35 million cars drive through the Holland Tunnel per year

15 million people pass through the subway stations per year

1 acre of public open space
Hudson Square Streetscape Improvement Plan

The Plan was developed by a world-class team of designers through a truly collaborative effort with community stakeholders. At the heart of it, this Plan is a public-private partnership that fosters a deep sense of community through physical improvements to our shared environment.

Using creative solutions to redesign our streets, we will:

- **strengthen** the street network and connections to adjacent neighborhoods and the waterfront.
- **enhance** and expand open space.
- **modify** streets to provide dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **furnish** sidewalks with greening, seating, lighting and public art.

**What is a streetscape?**

The streetscape is similar to a series of rooms: the sky is its ceiling, the buildings are its walls and the streets are its floor.

**The goals of the Plan**

- **MANAGE TRAFFIC**
  Balance the needs of the Holland Tunnel, an important regional transportation facility, with the needs of the local community.

- **CREATE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENTS**
  Prioritize pedestrians and promote streets as places for people to walk, socialize and experience Hudson Square.

- **CREATE OPEN SPACE**
  Improve existing open space and find opportunities to create new and engaging public spaces.

- **GREEN THE STREETS**
  Plant trees and manage stormwater by increasing permeable surfaces and planted areas.

- **DEFINE NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY**
  Bring the spirit of innovation that is thriving in the buildings into the public spaces.

- **IDENTIFY SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITIES**
  Reallocate the organization of streets to maximize space for people and greening.

- **SUPPORT RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES**
  Support local retail and businesses by developing an active street life.
Hudson Square is for people

The Five Initiatives of Hudson Square’s Streetscape Improvement Plan:

The Plan has five distinct initiatives that improve traffic flow, create open spaces, bring green to our streets and promote a pedestrian culture. Each component is immediately transformative. When taken together, these elements strengthen Hudson Square’s identity and serve as a model for a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable neighborhood.

1. SPRING ST.

Spring Street, the street that connects Hudson Square to SoHo and the waterfront, will be our Main Street with special light fixtures and signature trees that reinforce the street’s unique character.

2. SOHO SQUARE

Located at Sixth Avenue and Spring Street, SoHo Square will become a gateway that welcomes people into the neighborhood following renovations that substantially increase its size and improve its overall appearance.

3. VARICK ST.

Varick Street will be transformed into a street that balances vehicular needs with pedestrian movement, using custom-designed greening, seating, lighting and crossings.

4. HUDSON ST.

Hudson Street will be a grand allée, created by widening sidewalks to provide space for small outdoor “living rooms” in verdant surroundings.

5. THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Throughout the neighborhood there will be places to socialize, see and be seen. Abundant trees and plantings, comfortable places to sit and exciting public art will truly make Hudson Square a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable neighborhood.
Phasing & Implementation

The five-year Streetscape Improvement Plan is estimated to cost $27 million and focuses entirely on public land. The Plan will be funded through a public-private partnership. Our contribution to the Plan will be financed by issuing bonds backed by a portion of our special assessment. The Plan will be implemented as funds become available. As we develop our designs, we will undertake surveys and traffic studies. Final designs will require public review and approval of City agencies.

Green Benefits

Hudson Square will be a greener, more sustainable neighborhood that will benefit all New Yorkers. When the Plan is complete, every year our streetscape will:

- **sequester carbon dioxide** equivalent to 34 round-trips between New York and Los Angeles by air.

- **produce oxygen** equal to the total oxygen consumed by a class of fourth graders.

- **divert stormwater** and reduce the combined sewer overflows equivalent to eight Olympic-size swimming pools.

- **increase shade** and make Hudson Street six degrees cooler than it is today.

In the next five years, we will:

- **install** distinctive lights and plant signature trees along Spring Street to proclaim it as Hudson Square’s Main Street.

- **renovate** SoHo Square to establish it as the gateway into Hudson Square.

- **develop** custom-designed vine structures, subway vent seating, crosswalks with artful graphics, in-ground solar lights and gantry art, and study the feasibility of a planted median on Varick Street.

- **widen** the sidewalk, create outdoor “living rooms” nestled in pocket gardens and add a grand allée of trees to transform Hudson Street into a green boulevard.

- **plant** 150 trees and install biofiltration trenches, permeable paving and planting beds between tree pits, place City benches and custom-designed seating and bring public art to unexpected places.

While implementing our Plan, we will:

- **advocate** for interventions at the “edges” of our neighborhood. Safe and attractive connections can seamlessly link the area with its adjoining neighborhoods, while strengthening Hudson Square’s own identity.
Hudson Square is connected

Yesterday Spring Street was dominated by trucks and loading docks. Today it is a vital east-west street with New York’s finest retail and restaurants. Tomorrow it will be our Main Street connecting Hudson Square, SoHo and Hudson River Park.
Spring Street will be a place where people eat, shop and relax.

Spring Street is the only street in Hudson Square that runs all the way to the Hudson River. The street has vibrant commercial activity ranging from designer clothing and furniture stores to restaurants and bars to cultural destinations. We will build on the street’s existing appeal, strengthen its connectivity and distinguish its unique character with signature furnishings and trees.

Our Plan

We will transform Spring Street into an inviting street for traversing the neighborhood and experiencing Hudson Square.

The existing street lights will be replaced with distinctive fixtures with brighter, energy-efficient lights. The new lights will make the street safer at night and announce to pedestrians that they are in the heart of Hudson Square.

Signature trees, planted alongside permeable paving, biofiltration trenches and leafy planting beds, will line the sidewalks. We plan to double the number of trees on Spring Street today. When possible, green fences will be installed at parking lots.

Spring Street could connect a series of open spaces, like beads on a necklace. Extending from SoHo Square, Spring Street could potentially link the Urban Plaza at the Trump Hotel with a parking lot converted to a public space at Hudson Street and with the Hudson River Park via an at-grade pedestrian connection.

Spring Street will connect open spaces like “beads on a necklace.”

1 street lighting

2 street trees and planting beds

3 green fences

see map on next page
Spring Street, the street that connects Hudson Square to SoHo and the waterfront, will be our Main Street with special light fixtures and signature trees that reinforce the street’s unique character.

For more information about the Hudson Square Streetscape Improvement Plan, visit our website: HudsonSquareBid.com
Hudson Square is inviting

Yesterday when Sixth Avenue was extended south in the 1920s, a traffic island was created at Spring Street. Today called SoHo Square, it is a dated, underutilized space. Tomorrow it will be an important gateway into Hudson Square.
This open space will be Hudson Square’s front door.

Next to SoHo and near an important subway station, SoHo Square is ideally situated to become an emblematic gateway into Hudson Square. A renovation is long overdue. The street just west of SoHo Square, also known as “Little” Sixth Avenue, has limited traffic function and can be easily transformed into a mixed-use street.

**Our Plan**

We will redesign SoHo Square into a green, alluring open space that welcomes students, workers, residents and visitors to relax and play.

New and brighter lighting will make SoHo Square an inviting place for people, day and night. Our goal is to more than double the number of light fixtures.

Providing a pleasant urban respite, SoHo Square will be green and comfortable. Our Plan will provide significantly more seating in a variety of arrangements.

Expanded tree pits will accommodate growing tree roots to ensure healthy and thriving trees. Ideally, the number of trees would increase by 50 percent, and one-third of the paving would be permeable.

With a playful graphic treatment, Little Sixth Avenue will be converted into a mixed-use street that extends the expanse of the plaza. In doing so, the open space could be increased by 50 percent.

Raised crosswalks at Little Sixth Avenue will encourage pedestrian movement through the plaza by slowing vehicular traffic and making the intersection safer to cross.

A greener and more pronounced SoHo Square could also be the central nexus of green spaces to the north and south along Sixth Avenue.

SoHo Square is related to other open spaces along Sixth Avenue.

1. plaza lighting
2. seating
3. planting
4. permeable surface
5. mixed-use street
6. raised crosswalk

see map on next page
Located at Sixth Avenue and Spring Street, SoHo Square will become a gateway that welcomes people into the neighborhood following renovations that substantially increase its size and improve its overall appearance.

City benches and custom-designed seating provide places to sit.

New lighter surfaces give the plaza a fresh feel.

Planting beds between trees increase permeable surfaces.

Updated plaza lights make people feel safer at night.

For more information about the Hudson Square Streetscape Improvement Plan, visit our website: HudsonSquareBid.com
Hudson Square is on the move

Yesterday Varick Street was connected to Seventh Avenue as part of subway construction. Today it is choked by cars accessing the Holland Tunnel, which makes it hard for pedestrians to cross and interferes with local deliveries. Tomorrow the street will balance the needs of the regional transportation facility with those of the local business community.
The new Varick Street will be both greener and safer.

Varick Street has become a staging area for the Holland Tunnel. Bold, innovative measures are needed to address the street’s daily congestion. Varick Street has few trees and subsurface obstructions that limit conventional tree planting. Using site-specific, custom-designed vine structures, we will green the street.

Our Plan

We will reconfigure Varick Street into a place where people and cars can safely and efficiently coexist.

High-visibility custom crosswalks will be imprinted into the asphalt with playful graphics that evoke Hudson Square’s creative energy and complement Varick Street’s distinctive character.

Given subsurface constraints along Varick Street, we will use inventive solutions to green the street. Pedestrians will be shaded from the sun and be able to take refuge from the traffic under custom-designed vine structures with places for seating. Novel subway vent seating will use existing infrastructure to create additional places for people to sit. Our goal is to install seating on every block along Varick.

Illuminating the sidewalk from below, simple low-tech, in-ground solar lights will enliven the pedestrian experience at night.

Tunnel-bound vehicles are directed by a prominent highway traffic sign on the street. Using the same sign, we will install art on the alternate side of the gantry to engage pedestrians from the sidewalk.

As yet another resourceful way to green Varick Street, we will study the feasibility of a planted median that would separate Tunnel-bound and through traffic and provide pedestrians with a green refuge as they cross the street.

How Varick Street will change:

existing

proposed

see map on next page
Varick Street will be transformed into a street that balances vehicular needs with pedestrian movement, using custom-designed greening, seating, lighting and crossings.
Hudson Square is the place to be

Yesterday Hudson Street was all about the shipment of goods. Today it is appreciated as the most hospitable avenue in Hudson Square. Tomorrow it will be characterized by grandeur and greenery that will make it a world-class boulevard.
Hudson Street will have more space for people and trees.

Already Hudson Square’s most pleasant street, we can build on Hudson Street’s attractiveness to make it an even more desirable destination. Hudson Street has generous sidewalks with minimal subsurface obstructions. By reducing roadway lanes to standard lane widths, we reallocate road space to create widened sidewalks and more space for greening and social seating without having an impact on traffic flows.

Our Plan

We will accentuate Hudson Street as a lush promenade with many places to window shop, socialize and relax.

Hudson Street will be verdant and green. An allée with a double row of trees will line the widened sidewalk on the west side. We aim to increase the number of trees by over 60 percent.

Large planting zones will frame seating areas and create pocket gardens that resemble outdoor “living rooms,” which will be furnished with clusters of custom-designed modular seating. We strive to have at least one seating area on every block.

The position of the current parking and bike lanes will be reversed to create a buffered zone between drivers and bicyclists. Lush planted pedestrian refuge islands will be installed as the buffered bike lane is built.

Planting beds will channel stormwater run-off from pavement areas, and biofiltration trenches will help retain and manage stormwater, creating attractive and useful green elements.

How Hudson Street will change:

1. widened sidewalk
2. buffered bike lane
3. biofiltration trenches
4. double row of trees
5. pocket gardens
6. outdoor “living rooms”
7. planted refuge

see map on next page
Hudson Street will be a grand allée, created by widening sidewalks to provide space for small outdoor “living rooms” in verdant surroundings.

You could be here

Rendered view of Hudson Street

For more information about the Hudson Square Streetscape Improvement Plan, visit our website:

HudsonSquareBid.com
Hudson Square is our neighborhood

Yesterday the streets of Hudson Square served the needs of a manufacturing district. Today the buildings have been repurposed and repopulated, but the streets remain relics of its industrial past. Tomorrow the neighborhood streets will be greener, inviting and hospitable.
Hudson Square will have welcoming streets and sidewalks.

By rethinking the placement of sidewalk furniture, we can make space for greening and other desired public amenities like seating. Over the next decade, the neighborhood’s redevelopment will spur exciting new activities on Hudson Square’s streets and improve its retail environment. In the meantime, we can build on existing opportunities to enliven our streets and underutilized spaces with temporary, transitional furnishings and outdoor events.

Our Plan

We will make Hudson Square a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable community with a distinct identity and sense of community.

With 150 new trees and the installation of enlarged tree pits, permeable paving, biofiltration trenches and lush planting beds to retain stormwater and reduce sewer overflow, Hudson Square will literally and figuratively be a green neighborhood.

Moveable container forests will green streets in transition until development is completed, and permanent trees can be planted.

People will be able to relax outdoors and socialize in well-designed seasonal outdoor seating near local retail destinations, creating an active street life. At times, we will institute limited or restricted uses on local streets with low traffic volumes to foster mixed-use streets for the enjoyment of pedestrians and bicyclists, alongside vehicles.

Fairs and festivals will celebrate our neighborhood’s most valuable public space—its streets—while strengthening our neighborhood’s identity and supporting an animated local retail environment.

Improvements will be evenly distributed throughout the neighborhood.

1. street trees and planting beds
2. curbside seating
3. container forests
4. mixed-use streets
5. street fairs and festivals

People will be able to relax outdoors and socialize in well-designed seasonal outdoor seating near local retail destinations, creating an active street life. At times, we will institute limited or restricted uses on local streets with low traffic volumes to foster mixed-use streets for the enjoyment of pedestrians and bicyclists, alongside vehicles.

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see map on next page
The street when open to vehicles:

The street when open to pedestrians:
Throughout the neighborhood there will be places to socialize, see and be seen. Abundant trees and plantings, comfortable places to sit and exciting public art will truly make Hudson Square a socially, economically and environmentally sustainable neighborhood.
The Connection

Hudson Square is a Business Improvement District (BID) bounded by Canal Street, West Houston Street, Sixth Avenue and Greenwich Street. The Hudson Square Connection (HSC) is a 501c3 funded through a special assessment on commercial properties. HSC was established in 2009 to enhance the quality of life in the BID.

Project Credits

The Plan was developed by a consultant team through a visioning process with community stakeholders.

**LEAD / LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**
Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects
www.mnlandscape.com

**URBAN DESIGN**
Rogers Marvel Architects
www.rogersmarvel.com

**INDUSTRIAL DESIGN**
Billings Jackson Design
www.billingsjackson.com

**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & LIGHTING**
ARUP
www.arup.com

**GRAPHIC DESIGN**
Open
www.notclosed.com

**LAND SURVEYING**
Mercator
www.mercatorgroup.com

**THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED IN COORDINATION WITH CITY GUIDELINES**
Coordinated Street Furniture Franchise (2005)
PlaNYC 2030 (2007–2011)
Street Design Manual (2009)
Active Design Guidelines (2010)
Green Infrastructure (2011)
Bike Share (2011)

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