

NEW STUDY SHOWS TWO-WAY TOLLING ON VERRAZZANO-NARROWS BRIDGE WOULD REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN LOWER MANHATTAN

*Study by Hudson Square BID Also Shows Two-Way Tolling On VNB Combined
with MoveNY Congestion Pricing Plan Would Further Reduce Traffic*

*Advocates Join Hudson Square BID in Supporting Two-Way Tolling and
Congestion Pricing as Part of Efforts to Increase Street Safety*

Hudson Square, NYC – The Hudson Square Business Improvement District (BID) today released a new [study](#) showing that instituting two-way tolling on the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge (VNB) would reduce traffic congestion in Lower Manhattan and help increase pedestrian and cyclist safety in Hudson Square and along Canal Street.

According to the new study, which is based on expert analysis by Sam Schwartz Engineering, instituting two-way tolling on the VNB would reduce the number of westbound trips across Lower Manhattan into the Holland Tunnel by approximately 10 percent. During the afternoon rush hour this would remove more than 130 vehicles per hour from Hudson Square's streets.

The study also showed that combining two-way tolling on the VNB with the MoveNY or Fix NYC congestion pricing plans – which propose charging drivers for entering Manhattan's Central Business District – would do even more to reduce traffic in Lower Manhattan. According to the study, combining two-way tolling with the MoveNY plan would reduce westbound trips across Lower Manhattan into the Holland Tunnel by approximately 24 percent. The notorious Canal Street backup into the Holland Tunnel would be reduced by as much as 700 feet with two-way tolling and by 1,700 feet when combined with MoveNY.

“This new study is part of the Hudson Square BID's ongoing commitment to implementing traffic and streetscape improvements that will enrich our neighborhood,” **said Ellen Baer, president of the Hudson Square BID.** “The outlined proposals would reduce the severity and duration of traffic congestion and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety throughout the Hudson Square neighborhood. We look forward to working with our public and private partners and stakeholders to continue to make Hudson Square a true place for people.”

Car and truck traffic across Lower Manhattan has significantly increased ever since one-way westbound tolling was instituted on the VNB in 1986. This is because drivers are incentivized to save money on their westbound trip into New Jersey – up to \$17 for cars and \$92 for trucks – by avoiding the VNB's tolls and taking a detour across the Holland Tunnel which is toll free westbound.

Community leaders, elected officials and advocates have identified this increase in congestion as a root cause of risks to pedestrian and cyclist safety in Lower Manhattan. Transportation Alternatives

[has noted](#) that 13 pedestrian deaths have occurred on Canal Street since 2009 and more than 120 pedestrian and cyclist injuries have taken place along the street since 2013.

"At a time when congestion is at an all-time high, we need to stop giving drivers an incentive to bring their cars into Manhattan's Central Business District," said Paul Steely White, executive director of Transportation Alternatives. "The current situation is bad for safety, it's bad for the environment, and it's bad for our economy, so we commend the Hudson Square BID for identifying new ways to change this untenable status quo."

"This report clearly shows the local safety and health benefits of smart regional transportation policies like congestion pricing and a more rational tolling policy," said Tom Wright, president, Regional Plan Association. "As stated in our Fourth Regional Plan, we absolutely need new revenues to fix our transit system and improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists in the city. Fixing the tolls on the Verrazzano Narrows Bridge will provide traffic benefits across the city and region, and charging all cars to enter Manhattan's Central Business District will go even further to fixing traffic congestion. Congratulations to the Hudson Square BID for this report."

The BID's study – including the analysis by Sam Schwartz Engineering – utilized the Balanced Transportation Analyzer (BTA), which is an area-wide model developed by Charles Komanoff to estimate how a congestion charge in Manhattan would affect New York City. The BTA model was also used extensively in preparing the MoveNY and Fix NYC plans to estimate the potential traffic impacts and tolling scenarios.

About the Hudson Square BID

The [Hudson Square Business Improvement District](#) is leading the effort to improve the public spaces in a major creative hub, home to more than 40,000 people working in advertising, design, media, technology, and other cutting-edge businesses. In 2012, the BID unveiled its \$27 million, neighborhood improvement plan for improving pedestrian safety, traffic flow, and the overall streetscape environment through a public-private partnership with the City. The neighborhood is generally bounded by Clarkson Street on the north, Canal Street on the south, 6th Avenue on the east and West Street on the west.