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**NEWLY INDEPENDENT METROPOLITAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE
NAMES ROLAND LEWIS AS PRESIDENT AND CEO**

**Lewis Brings Policy and Development Expertise and
Passion for Social Justice to Non-Profit Group that Promotes
Thoughtful Stewardship of the Region's Waterfront**

Roland Lewis, executive director of Habitat for Humanity - New York City since 1997, has been named president and CEO of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance. MWA, a project of the Municipal Art Society since 1999, was launched as an independent non-profit organization on April 1. It is the region's leading advocate for reclaiming the waterfront for improved public access, recreation and transportation.

"As private and public development at the water's edge proceeds at a gold-rush pace, it is abundantly clear that the need for a strong and independent voice on waterfront issues has never been greater," said Kent L. Barwick, president of MAS. "Roland is the right person to lead MWA as it matures and tackles ever greater challenges in City Hall, Albany, Trenton and Washington, DC."

More than 13 million people in New York and New Jersey live on or near the water. MWA is committed to a sustainable, working waterfront — a waterfront that works for *all* people who live, visit or work in the metropolitan region.

On both sides of the harbor, MWA has built an awareness of critical shorefront issues through public education, demonstration projects, timely issue conferences and the highly respected website, Waterwire.net. As the city continues to demonstrate creative new thinking and vigorous leadership on waterfront issues — including the vision of a unified harbor district — the need for a focused advocacy voice is clear.

A lifelong New Yorker, Lewis is deeply committed to the vision of a vibrant, healthy city, whether on the shorefront or inland.

"Just as Habitat-NYC works to create equity in housing, MWA will work to create equity for all residents of the region by giving open access to one of our greatest natural resources — our more than 700 miles of waterfront," Lewis said. "I'm proud to take the helm at MWA and honored to have a leadership role in guiding the development of our waterfront and harbors as shared resources to be enjoyed and cared for."

"Lewis, who is one of the city's strongest advocates for progressive community development, will build on MWA's reputation as a highly effective voice on public policy," said Clay Hiles, executive director of the Hudson River Foundation. "We are fortunate to launch MWA with strong programming and infrastructure, built by Carter Craft and an outstanding staff, who will continue leading positive changes in, on and around the region's waterways."

Carter Craft will continue to serve MWA as director of programming and operations.

Some of the MWA's achievements include:

- Spearheading a campaign that led to the creation of the City Council's Committee on Waterfronts;
- Advocating for a more visionary federal transportation bill that included more than \$260 million for waterfront improvements;
- Organizing a series of successful demonstration projects ranging from floating docks to model bulkhead reconstruction to the first use of biodiesel by an historic ship;
- Creating and maintaining a website, Waterwire.net. Receiving more than 1,000 visits daily, Waterwire.net is the public's primary source for information on the waterfront;
- Building coalitions among community, development, environmental, transportation, government and other interest groups;
- Hosting regular region-wide programs and conferences that bring together disparate interests in the waterfront arena;
- Leading the first comprehensive effort to identify and map all the waterfront access points and ferry routes in the metropolitan area;
- Working with community groups to create a comprehensive development plan for the East River.

Over the past decade, Lewis "grew" Habitat-NYC from a four-person staff to an influential 40-member organization with the ability to build more and better housing. He brought every sector of the city together — housing advocates and developers, corporations, government, volunteers and faith groups — on common ground to address the city's housing crisis.

Locally and nationally, Lewis led Habitat affiliates in advocating for better public policy on housing, on the city, state and federal levels. Likewise, he was at the forefront of building affordable green homes that are healthy and energy-efficient.

"Roland made Habitat-NYC a force to be reckoned with — a force dedicated to the good of all New Yorkers," said Les Bluestone, board president of Habitat-NYC. "He will bring the same energy and commitment to protecting and wisely developing our waterfront."

A 1982 graduate of Columbia University, Lewis earned a master's in city and regional planning and a law degree from Rutgers University in 1988. He began his career in affordable housing as a partner in the law firm of Dellapa, Lewis and Perseo, whose clients included not-for-profit corporations, civic groups, churches, cooperative corporations, and private real estate developers. He currently serves on the board of the New York Foundation. Lewis lives in Flatbush, Brooklyn, with his wife and four children.

For the past two years, he served as co-chair of Housing First!, the city's broadest and most influential housing coalition. It includes more than 300 member groups.

The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance works to revitalize the shorelines and waterways of the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area by promoting sustainable development and the best uses of these resources to maintain the economic health of the region and the vitality of its diverse communities and residents. Working independently and in partnership with public, private and community stakeholders, MWA advances its vision for the waterfront through public education, determined advocacy, demonstration projects, and by encouraging neighborhood involvement and stewardship.

Among the distinguished individuals who are serving as incorporating board members are Majora Carter, founder of Sustainable South Bronx and winner of a 2006 MacArthur Foundation Award; Eugenia Flatow, founder of the Coalition for the Bight and Director of the New York City Soil and Water Conservation District; and Pete Seeger, founder of Clearwater. These individuals represent the high standard of science, art and activism that MWA aims to engender in current and future generations.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund, one of the original supporters of MWA, has made a multi-year pledge to the new organization. Longtime funders The Mertz Gilmore Foundation and the Abby R. Mauzé Charitable Trust have also supported the group in its transition to independence. MAS and MWA were assisted over the last two years by volunteers from the Harvard Business School Club of New York's Community Partners Consulting program. The law firm of Weil, Gotshal & Manges generously provided legal counsel.

MWA joins a distinguished group of independent organizations that were incubated at MAS. The New York Landmarks Conservancy and the Historic Districts Council are just two examples of civic groups that got their start at MAS before being successfully launched.

The Municipal Art Society of New York is a private, non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote a more livable city. Since 1893, the MAS has worked to enrich the culture, neighborhoods and physical design of New York City. It advocates for excellence in urban design and planning, contemporary architecture, historic preservation and public art.

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