



Corridor Vision

# BQE CENTRAL

Workshop #1





# Visioning Goals

**A Corridor-Wide Approach** | The BQE is a vital part of our transportation system and our economy. We can and must immediately start working on a community-driven plan for the safe, modern, resilient roadway we need.



## Urgency & Resiliency

Take action as necessary to ensure that City section remains safe; prioritize sustainable design.



## Equity

Invest in communities along the full BQE corridor, not just higher income City section.



## Fiscal Responsibility

Pursue federal grants; make needed repairs; focus investments on greatest impact.



## Stakeholder Involvement

Work with elected officials and communities to develop BQE vision and move projects forward.

# Who's Involved?



## Community Visioning Council

... Guides the Engagement Process

Representatives from elected official offices, industry, small business organizations, civic and tenant associations, environmental justice and transportation advocates



## Community Partners

... Help Lead Grassroots Engagement

Engagement resources for community based organizations, with meaningful community ties, demonstrated experience in mobilizing their constituencies, and specialty in multilingual capacity

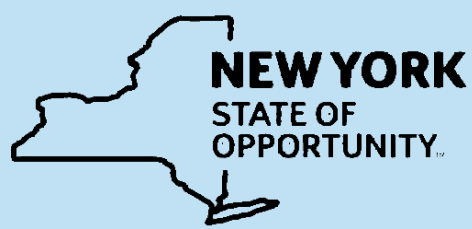


## Topical Working Groups

... Facilitate Focussed Discussions

Subject Matter Experts facilitate discussion around critical issues such as traffic, transportation, and logistics; open space, connectivity, and public realm; environmental justice, accessibility, and equity; and land use and economic development

## Local, State, & Federal Agencies



Department of  
Transportation

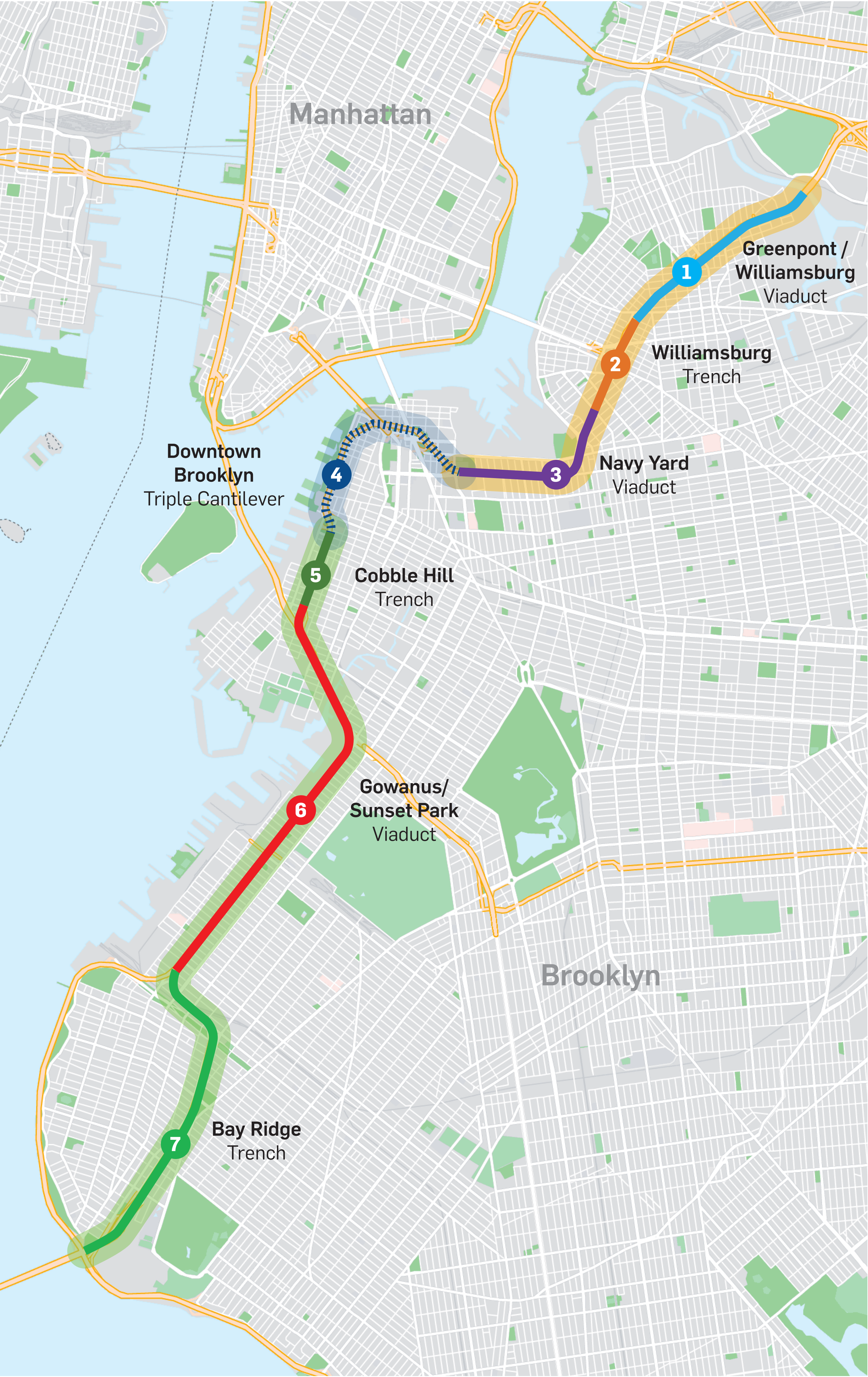


U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
Federal Highway  
Administration

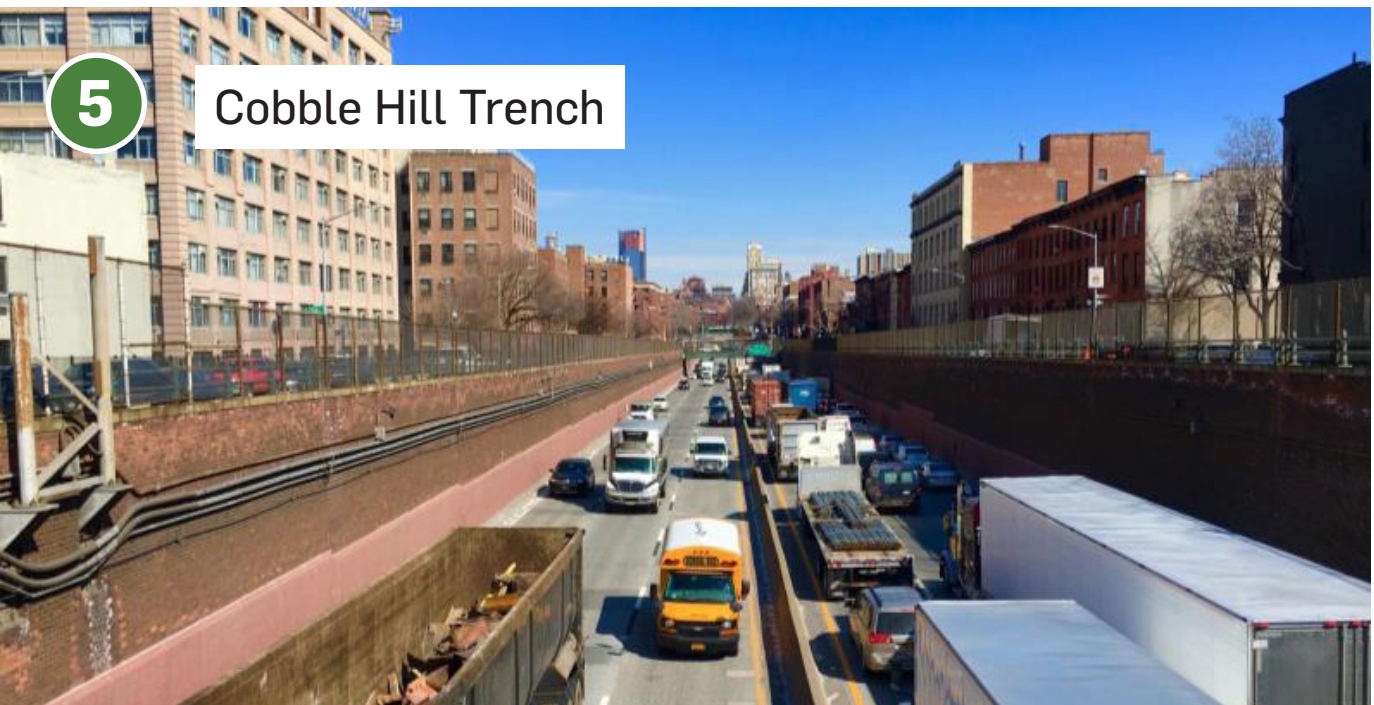




# BQE Corridor Vision: Focus Areas

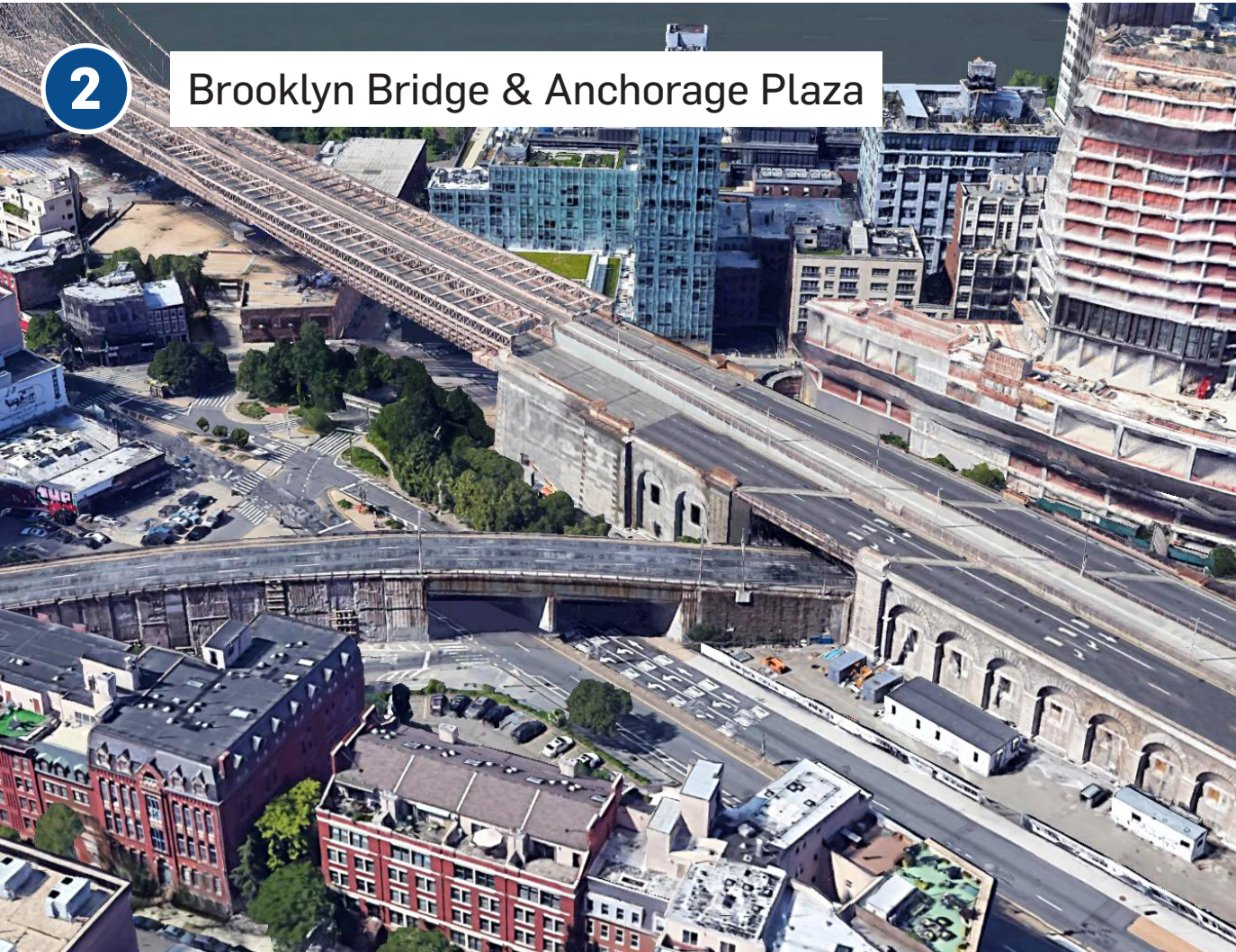
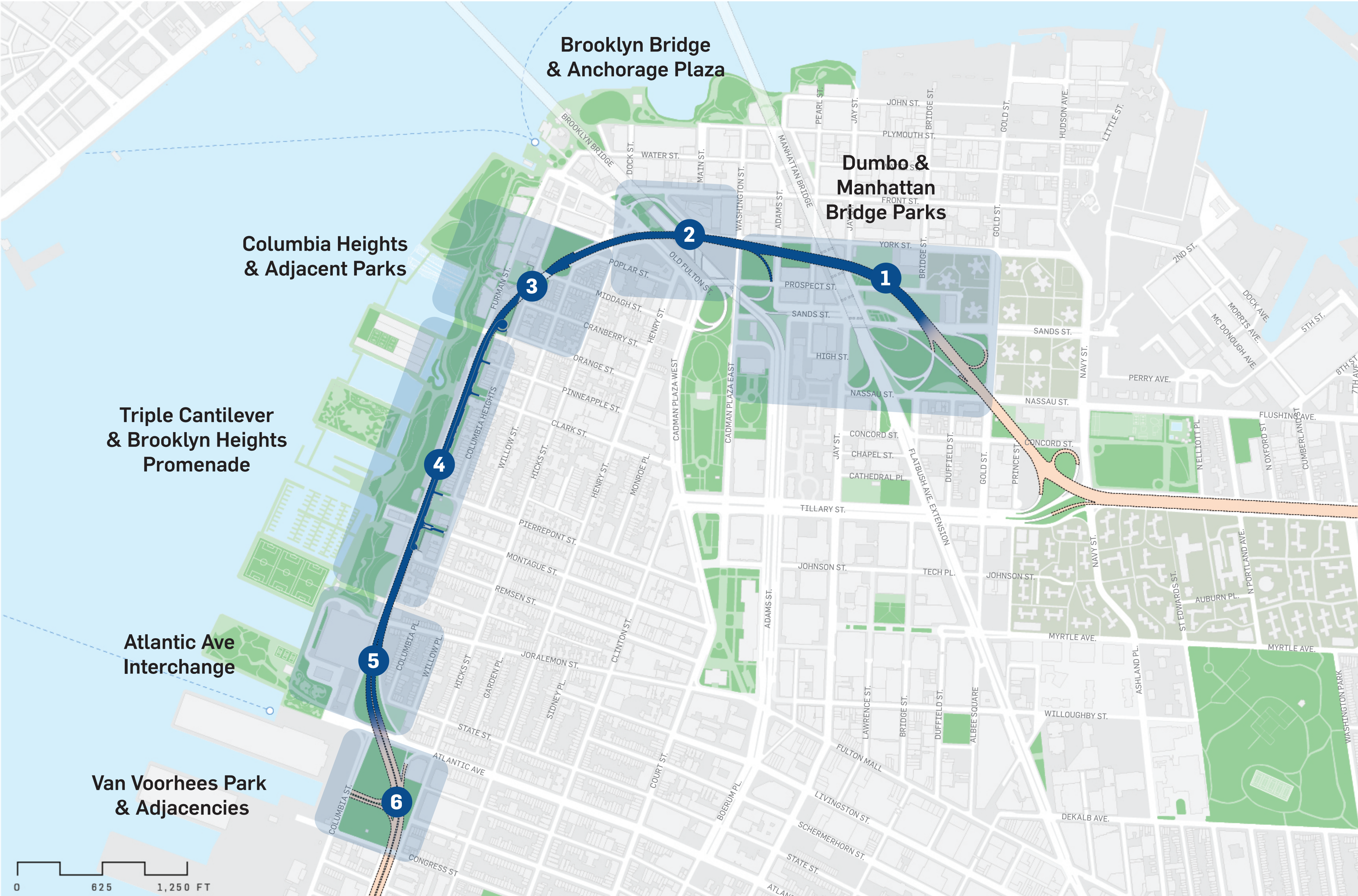


- BQE-North
- BQE-Central
- BQE-South
- City-Owned
- State-Owned





BQE Central: Focus Areas





# Engagement Approach

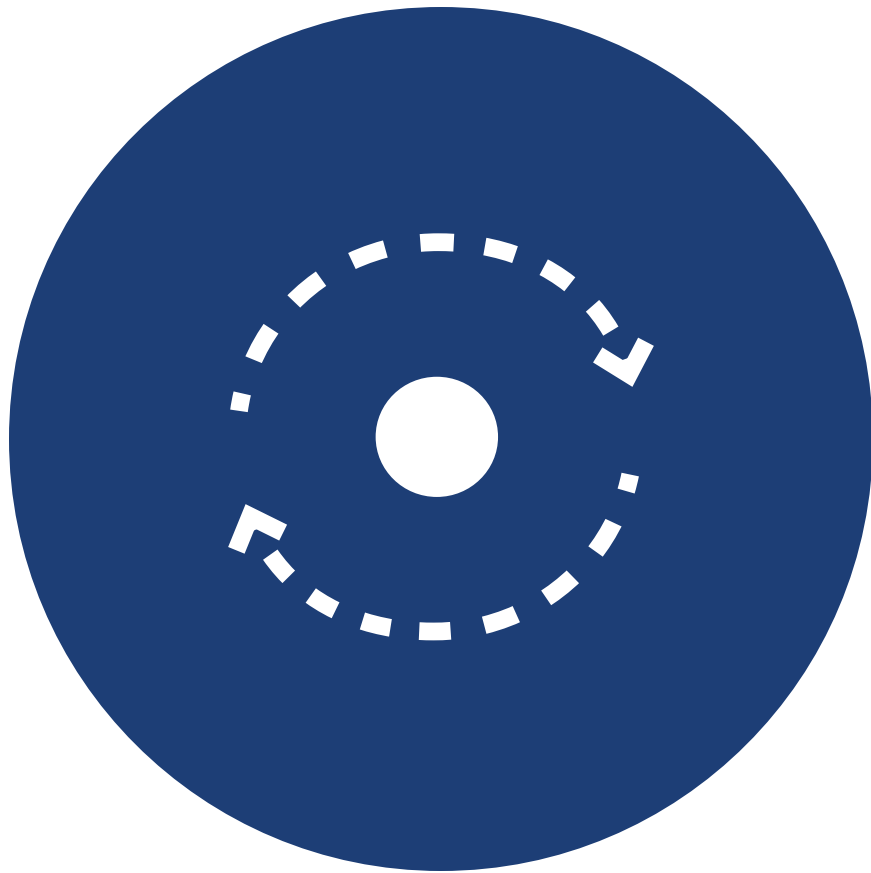
Community engagement will guide Mayor Adams' and DOT's decisions about the future of the full Brooklyn BQE Corridor.



Inclusive



Transparent



Consistent

# Anticipated Timelines

### Upcoming Engagement Workshops

#### BQE Central

Tuesday, October 18, 2022  
BQE Central Workshop 1 (virtual)

November/December 2022:  
Date forthcoming

January-March 2023:  
Date forthcoming

#### BQE North and South

Thursday, November 3, 2022  
BQE North and South Workshop 1 (virtual)

Monday, November 8, 2022  
BQE South Workshop 1 (in-person)

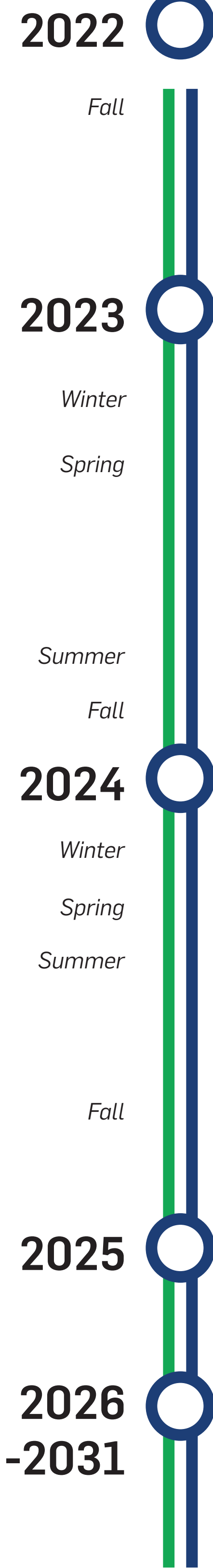
Thursday November 10, 2022  
BQE North Workshop 1 (in-person)

*\*All workshops will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m.*

Visit

[www.bqevision.com](http://www.bqevision.com) for updates.

## BQE North & South



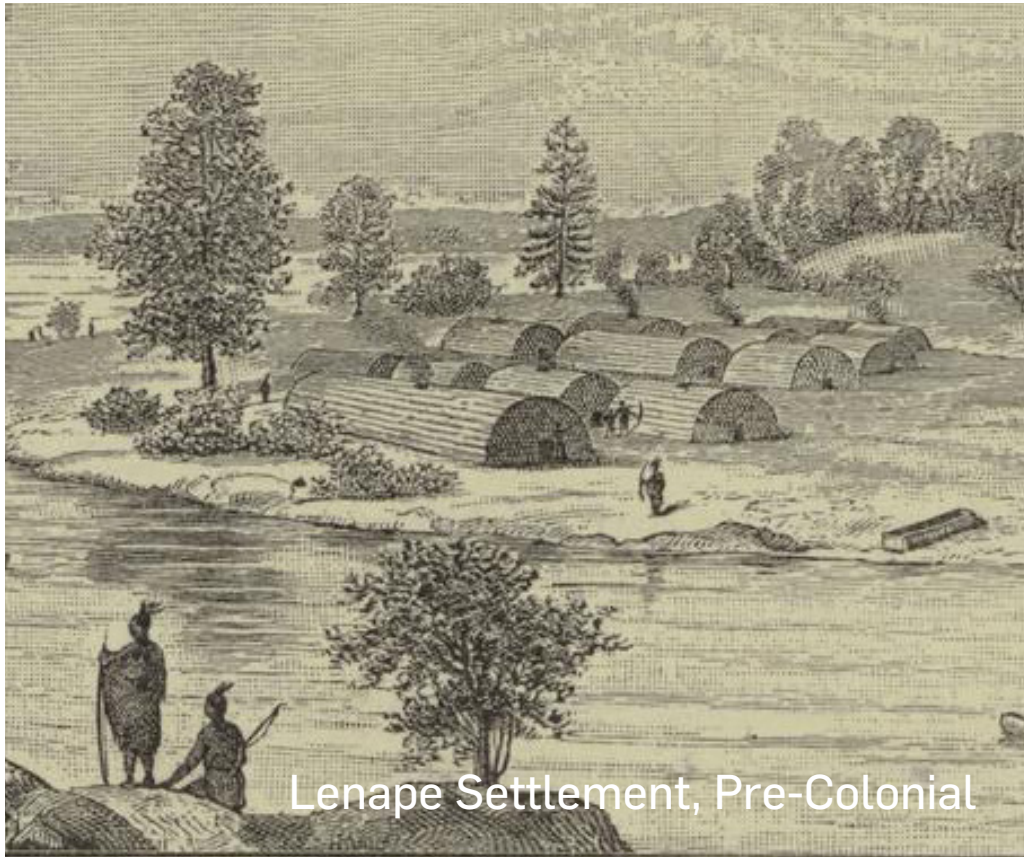
## BQE Central



Construction



# BQE History: Central Area



Lenape Settlement, Pre-Colonial



Ferry Landing in Breuckelen, 1746



Map of Brooklyn Village, 1816



Brooklyn Heights, 1852



Litchfield's Solution to Brooklyn, 1931



Construction of Cadman Plaza Park, 1936

## Glacial Topography

In its retreat to the north, the Laurentide Ice Sheet cleaves current-day Brooklyn into two halves: a hilly Manhattan-oriented area to the north, and a broad, flat landscape to the south.

## Indigenous Habitation

Brooklyn was originally inhabited by a group of American Indians who called themselves the Lenape, which means “the People.” The area now known as Brooklyn Heights was ‘Ihpetonga’ by the Lenape, which means ‘High Sandy Hill’.

## “Breuckelen”

The Dutch settle in Manhattan in the early 1600s, with limited settlement in Brooklyn along the waterfront.

Modern-day Brooklyn Heights becomes the ferry landing site for a growing rural town variously called “Breuckelen” or “Brookland”.

By the time of the American Revolution, the waterfront was beginning to industrialize, and a few houses had been built atop the bluff.

## Brooklyn: Reshaping the Heights

Robert Fulton launches the Nassau, a ferry boat from Manhattan to Brooklyn, helping Brooklyn become one of the first “commuter suburbs.”

Brothers John Middagh Hicks and Jacob Middagh Hicks begin developing land on the northern section of The Heights naming streets after their family (Middagh, Hicks) and after fruits, such as Pineapple and Orange.

Hezekiah Pierrepont hires a surveyor to lay out a grid plan for Brooklyn Heights similar to John Randel Jr.’s plan for Manhattan.

On May 24, 1883, the Brooklyn Bridge opens, becoming the first structure to physically connect Brooklyn and New York City.

In 1908, the Interborough Rapid Transit Company opens Brooklyn’s first underground subway station at Borough Hall Station in Brooklyn Heights.

Early twentieth century urbanists begin to propose developments marrying architecture and transportation into infrastructure for the future. Proposals include Edgar Chambless’ “Roadtown” and Litchfield’s Solution.

The City of New York decides to demolish the Sands Street Elevated Terminal and redevelop the vacant land into Cadman Plaza Park.



## BQE History: Central Area



Montague Street in Brooklyn Heights, 1939



Triple Cantilever, 1945



Construction of the BQE, 1948



The Promenade, 1950



BQE Triple Cantilever, 1955



Brooklyn Heights Promenade, 1971

### Planning the BQE

The Regional Plan Association recommends the construction of a link known as the “Brooklyn-Queens Connecting Highway” between the newly proposed Gowanus Parkway and the Triborough Bridge.

In 1940, New York City arterial coordinator Robert Moses recommends that the BQE (initially known as the Brooklyn-Queens Connecting Highway) “should be filled immediately as an aid to the national defense.”

The Brooklyn Eagle issue of September 19, 1942 reports that the BQE route would bisect the neighborhood with the front-page headline: “Plan for Express Highway Is Shocking.”

Members of the Brooklyn Heights Association develop a “Citizen Alternative Plan” that proposed a three-decked structure along the Brooklyn Heights waterfront, topped by an extension of residents’ private gardens. Moses agrees to the “Citizen Alternative Plan” on the condition that the park and promenade would be open to the public.

### Construction of the BQE

Inspired by the tiered topography of the Villa d’Este at Tivoli, the engineering firm Andrews & Clark draft a plan for a cantilevered, three-tier structure to carry the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway beneath Brooklyn Heights, featuring a public promenade at the highest tier.

Construction of the BQE begins in fall of 1946, demolishing many buildings in its path through North Heights.

The Promenade officially opens to the public on October 7, 1950.

Nearby, the Farragut Houses, three superblocks of residential apartments, are completed.

In 1954, the triple cantilevered section opens in entirety when the lower highway accepts traffic, allowing motorists to view the Lower Manhattan skyline and New York Harbor, while residents enjoy the Promenade above.

The final section of the BQE in Brooklyn is completed along the Brooklyn Navy Yards in 1960.

On November 23, 1965, New York Landmarks Preservation Commission designates Brooklyn Heights as the city’s first historic district. Months later, Brooklyn Heights becomes a National Landmark Historic District, in part due to the Promenade, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The city enacts a “Special Scenic District” that creates a protected view from the edge of the Promenade to a line midway in the East River.



# BQE History: Central Area



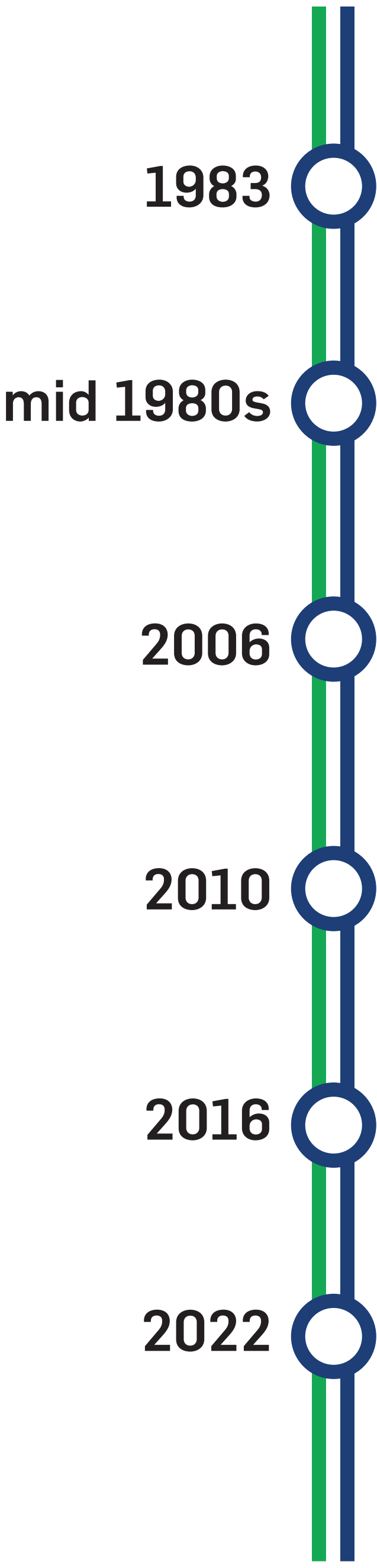
BQE, 1999



Brooklyn Bridge Park, 2018



BQE Town Hall, 2019



## Reclaiming the Waterfront

The Port Authority seeks input from local community leaders to transform the vacant land between Piers 1-6, into what is now Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Starting in the mid-1980s, the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway begins a rehabilitation effort to match Interstate standards.

The New York State Department of Transportation convenes a Design and Construction Workshop to begin a rebuilding and redesigning process for the triple-cantilever section of the BQE.

Pier 1, the first official section of the Brooklyn Bridge Park, opens to the public at a ribbon cutting ceremony. The nine-acre site featured vast green lawns, a playground, and a spacious promenade along the river.

The New York City Department of Transportation initiates the BQE Triple Cantilever Rehabilitation Project.

Mayor Adams announces public engagement process to accelerate long-term fix for the BQE and reconnect communities throughout Brooklyn corridor.



Aerial of Brooklyn Heights, 1924



Aerial of Brooklyn Heights, 1951



Aerial of Brooklyn Heights, 1996



Aerial of Brooklyn Heights, 2018



# Past Concepts

A great deal of work has already been done over many years by NY State, New York City, elected officials, and civic groups, including the ideas below. As we enter the engagement process for BQE Central, NYC DOT looks forward to discussing the community's ideas, and what is feasible for the future.



## The Future of the BQE

### The Future of the BQE Report

**Designer //** The New York City Council

**Year of Proposal //** January, 2020

**Notes //** This report synthesizes and analyzes various proposals to date, including ones on this board. It also looks at a tunnel alternative and made some high-level recommendations for the entirety of the BQE corridor.



### BQE Expert Panel Report

**Designer //** BQE Expert Panel

**Year of Proposal //** January, 2020

**Notes //** This report recommends an immediate fix for the roadway, actions to reduce traffic volumes and improve reliability, and a comprehensive plan to connect Staten Island, Brooklyn and Queens.



### Reimagining the BQE

**Designer //** Regional Plan Association

**Year of Proposal //** April, 2019

**Notes //** Whereas other reports focused on the structure's design, this report assembles a range of policies and other recommendations aimed at reducing traffic and, in turn, the number of lanes required on the BQE.



### BQ-Park

**Designer //** Bjarke Ingels Group

**Year of Proposal //** April, 2019

**Notes //** This proposal turns the BQ-Expressway into a BQ-Park. The proposal includes local park access that accommodates a meandering parkway, a proposed deck crossing, and the beginnings of a linear park.



### Comptroller's Plan

**Designer //** Scott Stringer with DLANDstudio

**Year of Proposal //** March, 2019

**Notes //** This plan calls for converting the triple cantilever and the Cobble Hill trench into a truck-only highway topped with a nearly two-mile-long "linear park."



### BHA Alternative Concept

**Designer //** Brooklyn Heights Association with Marc Wouters Studio

**Year of Proposal //** November, 2018

**Notes //** This proposal is a hybrid construction concept. It combines a bypass structure, with traditional lane-by-lane replacement, and at-grade reconstruction for maximum efficiency.

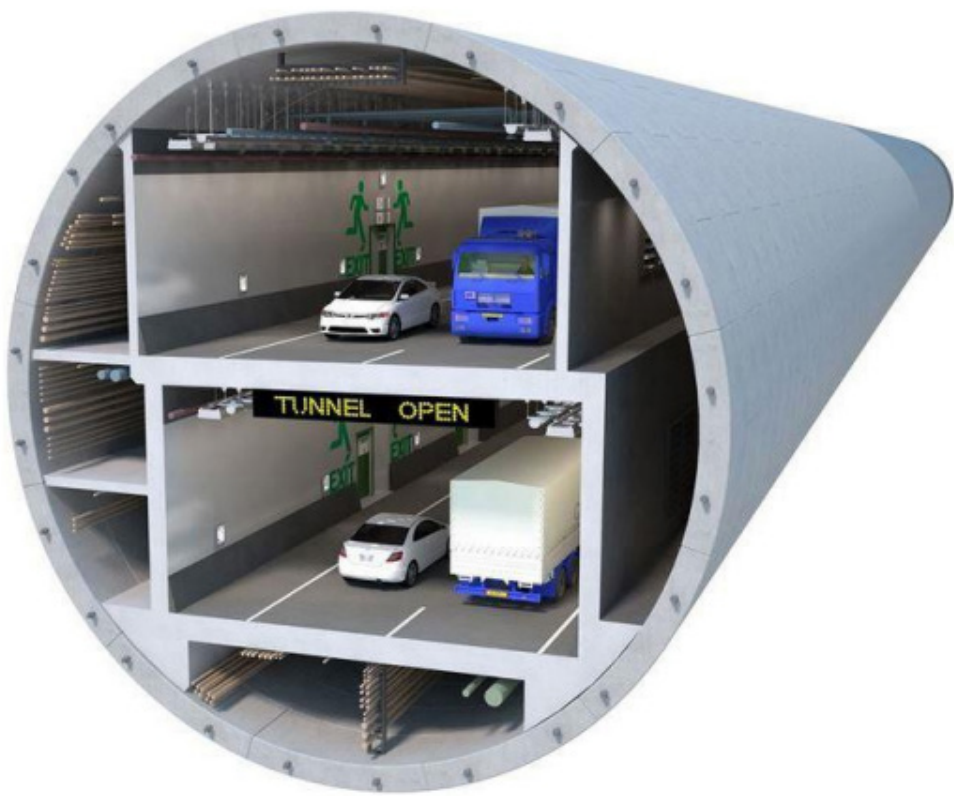


### NYC DOT Triple Cantilever (TER)

**Designer //** NYC DOT

**Year of Proposal //** September, 2018

**Notes //** This alternative conducts construction completely within NYC DOT's right-of-way and places a six lane temporary highway at the level of the promenade.  
**Note: This proposal will not be pursued.**



### Bypass Tunnel

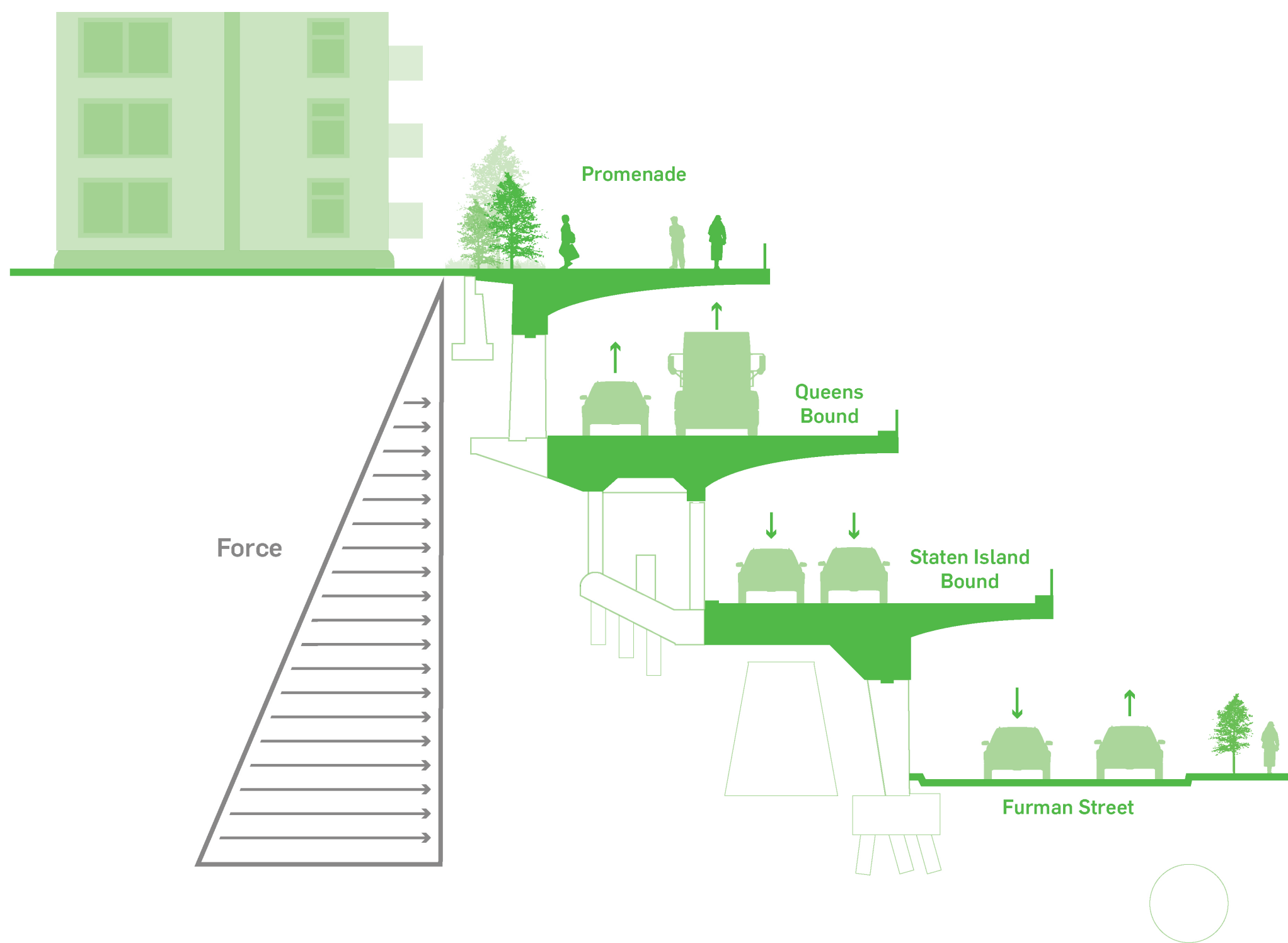
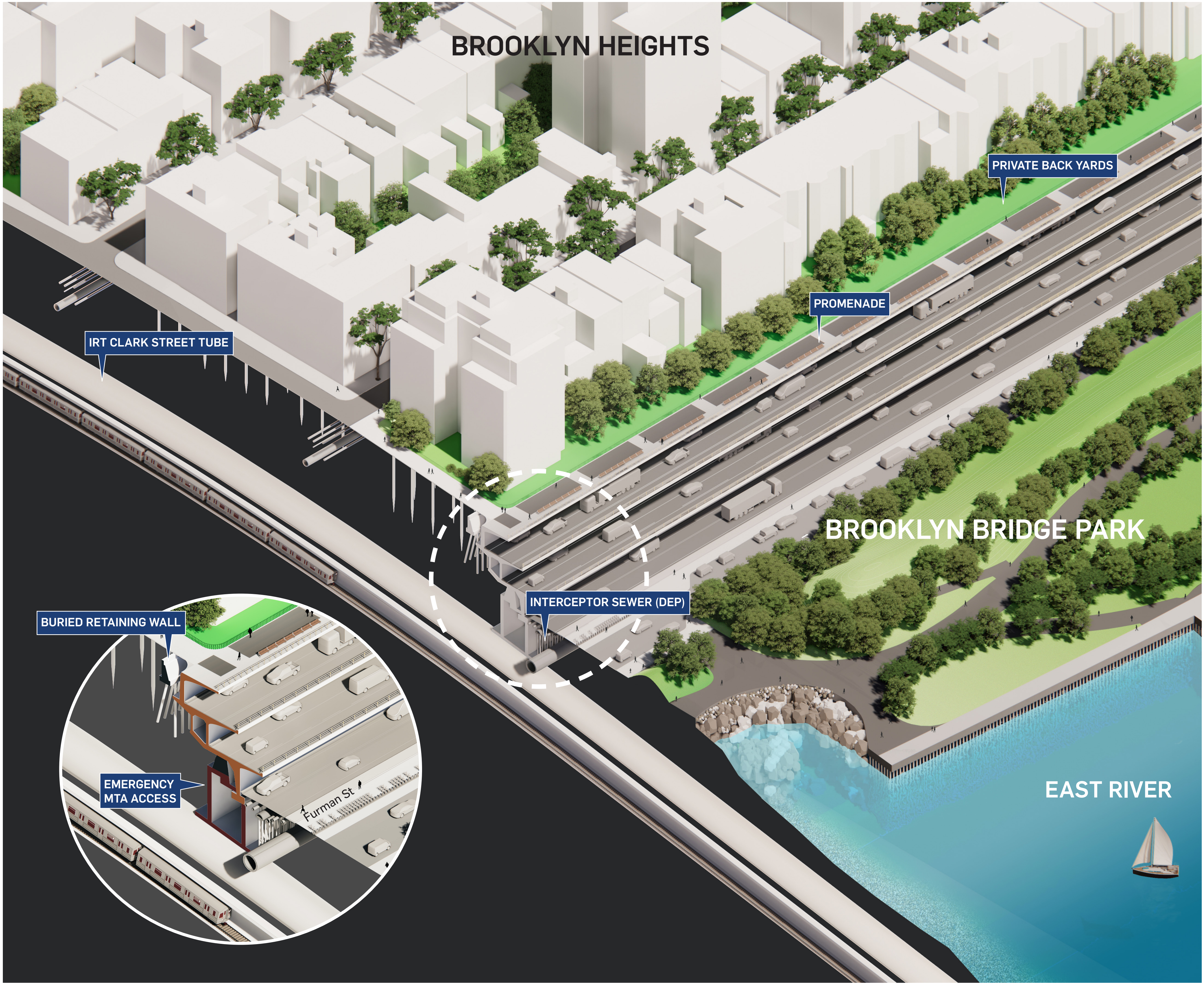
**Designer //** NYC DOT with Henningson, Durham and Richardson Architecture and Engineering, P.C

**Year of Proposal //** April, 2016

**Notes //** NYCDOT studied the feasibility of tunnels as an alternative to the current roadway. A 3D geometric study was done for six tunnel locations along the BQE route.



# Triple Cantilever: An Engineering Marvel

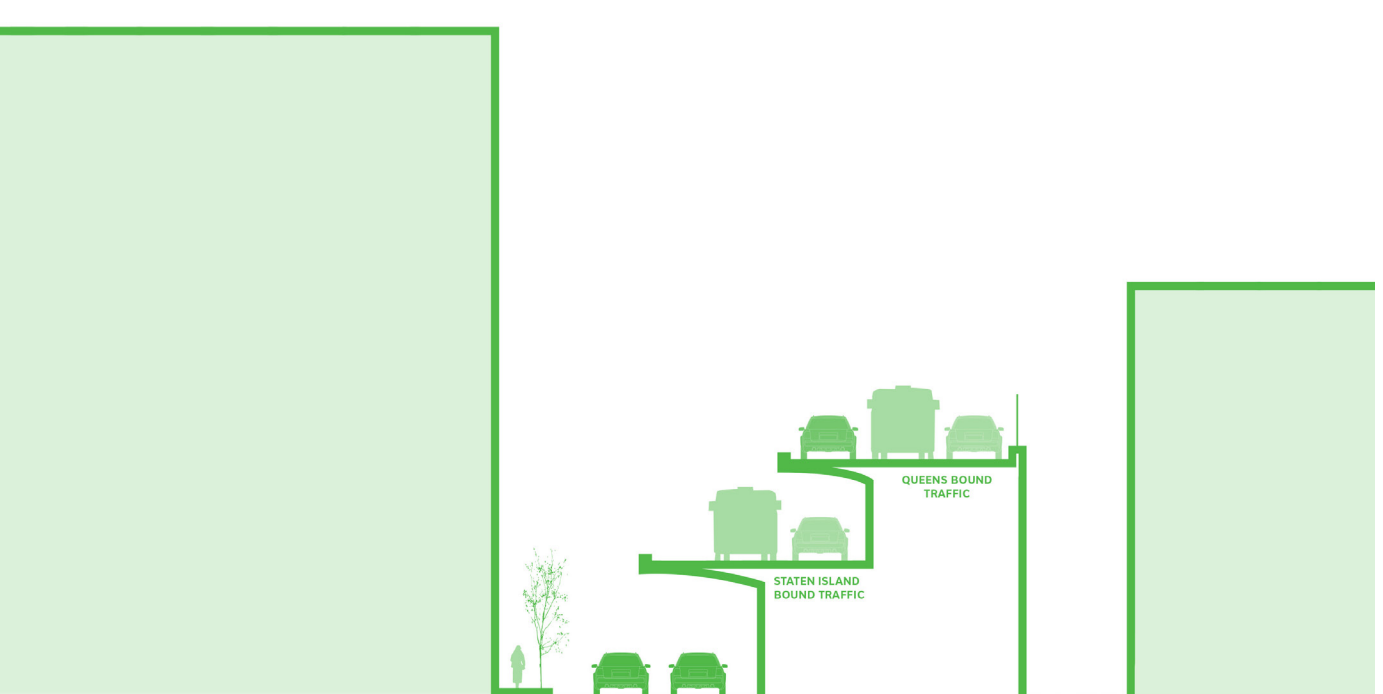
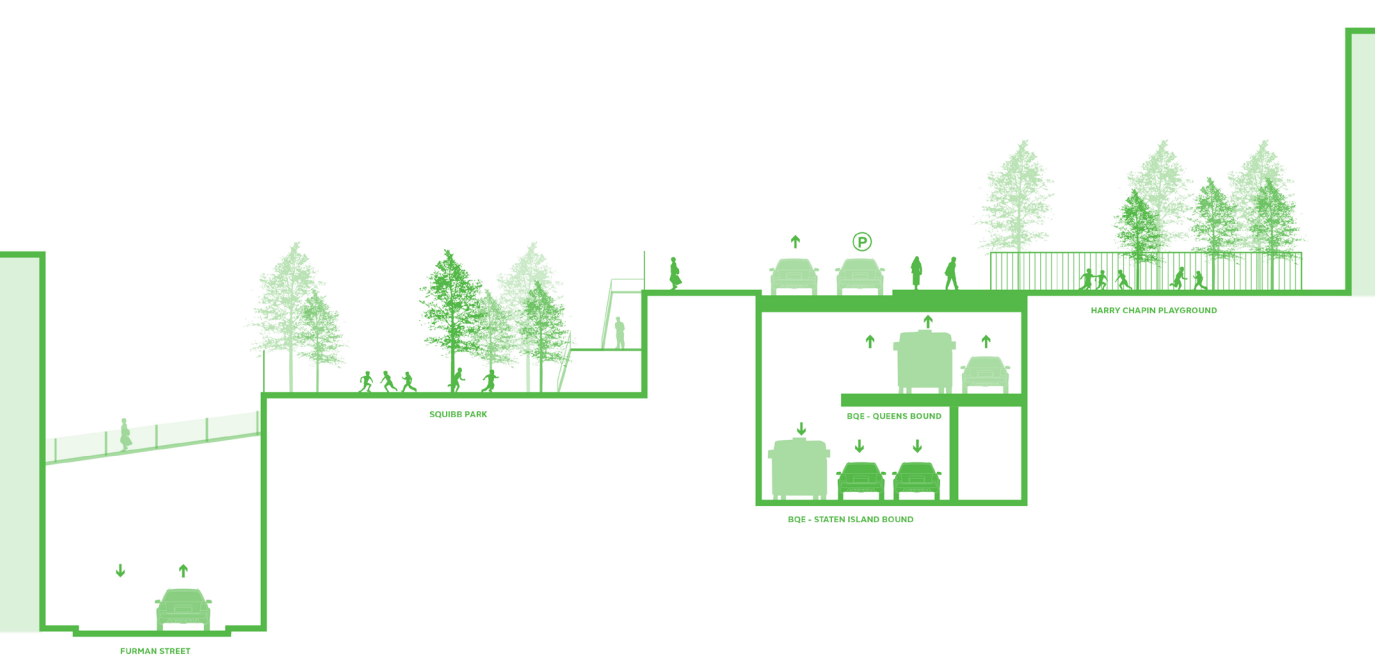
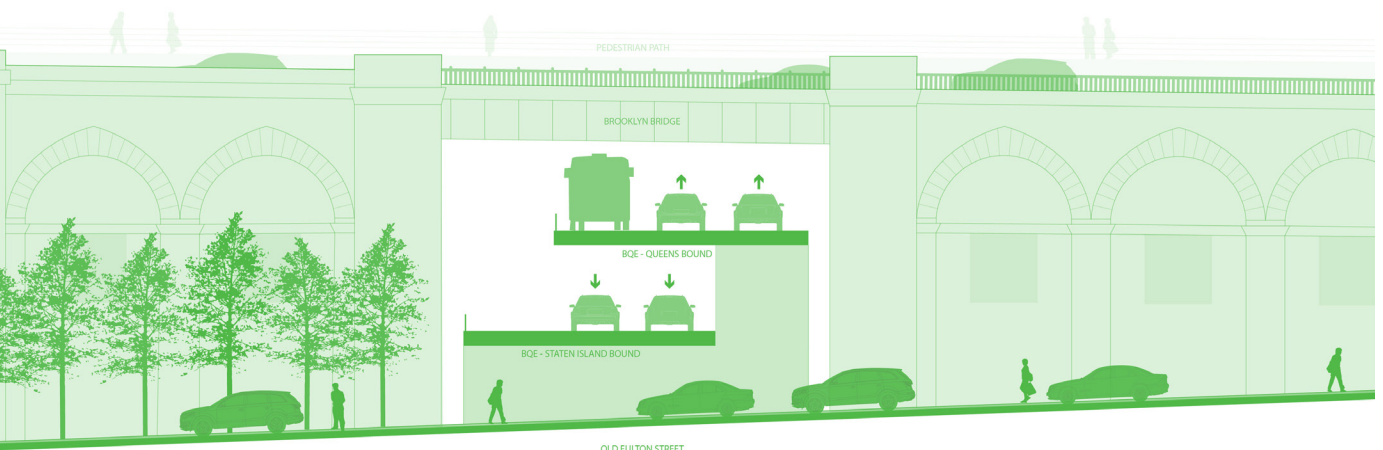
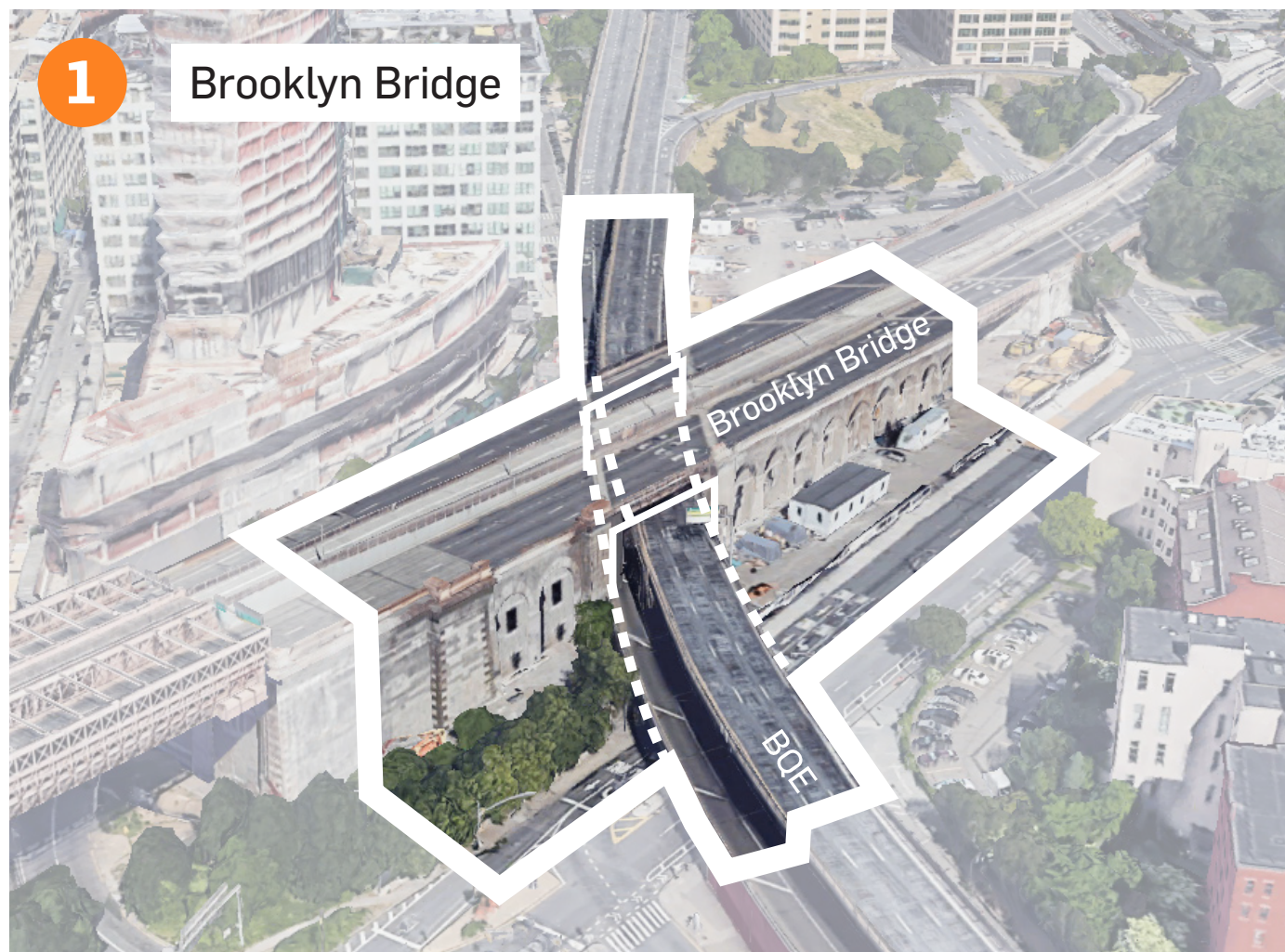
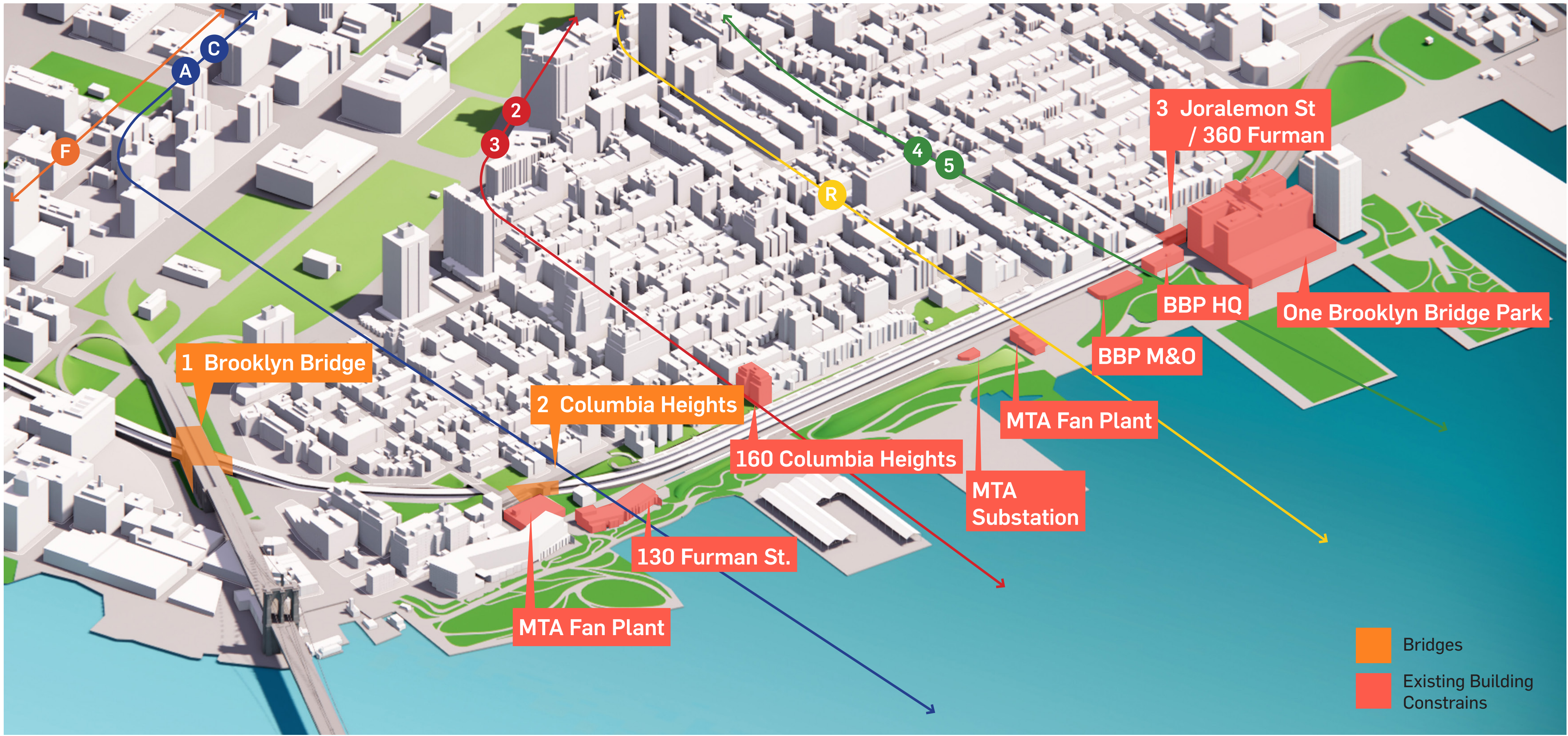


## Triple Cantilever

A unique cantilever structure constructed into the bluffs of Brooklyn Heights during the 1940s, the Triple Cantilever elegantly masks a web of utilities, sub-grade infrastructure and retaining walls that support one of New York City's most critical arteries for traffic and one of its most famous promenades for people. As NYC DOT investigates potential strategies for rehabilitating the BQE, understanding the existing conditions beneath the BQE, from sewers and subways to impacts to nearby properties and streets, will be critical in guiding a smart, effective, and long-term solution. The accompanying diagram illustrates how the infrastructure behind the Triple Cantilever and beneath Furman Street ties into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood.



# Study Area: Structural Pinchpoints





# Traffic & Freight



As the only interstate highway in Brooklyn, the BQE is a key piece of the roadway and freight network of New York. Even if you personally don't use the BQE, chances are most of the things you buy do.



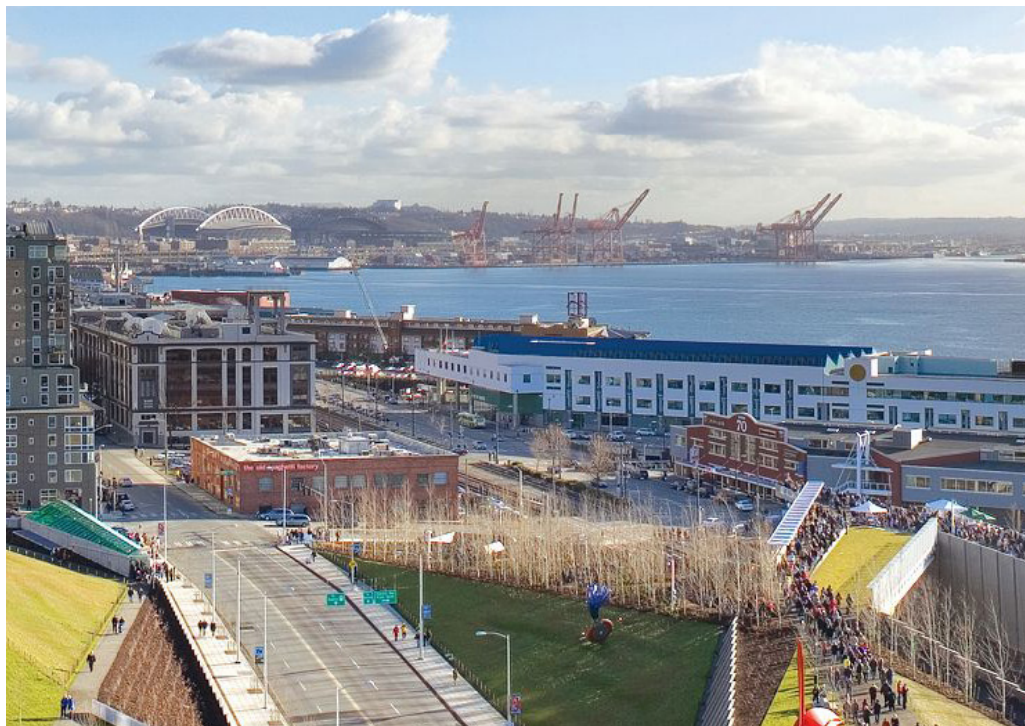
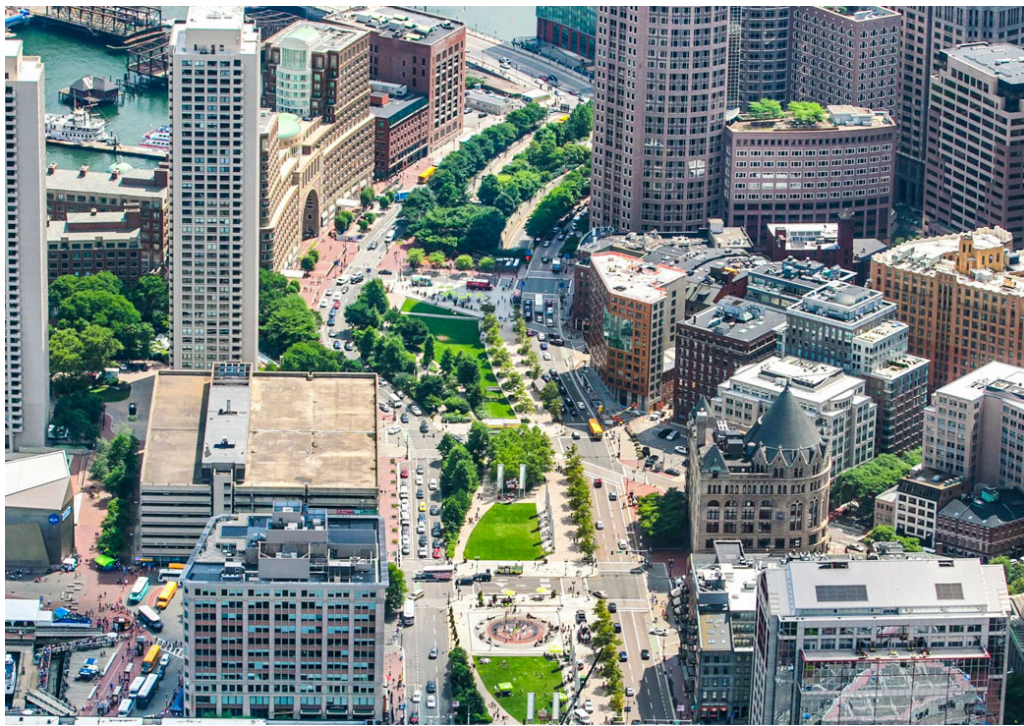
# Inspirations: Ideas from Other Cities



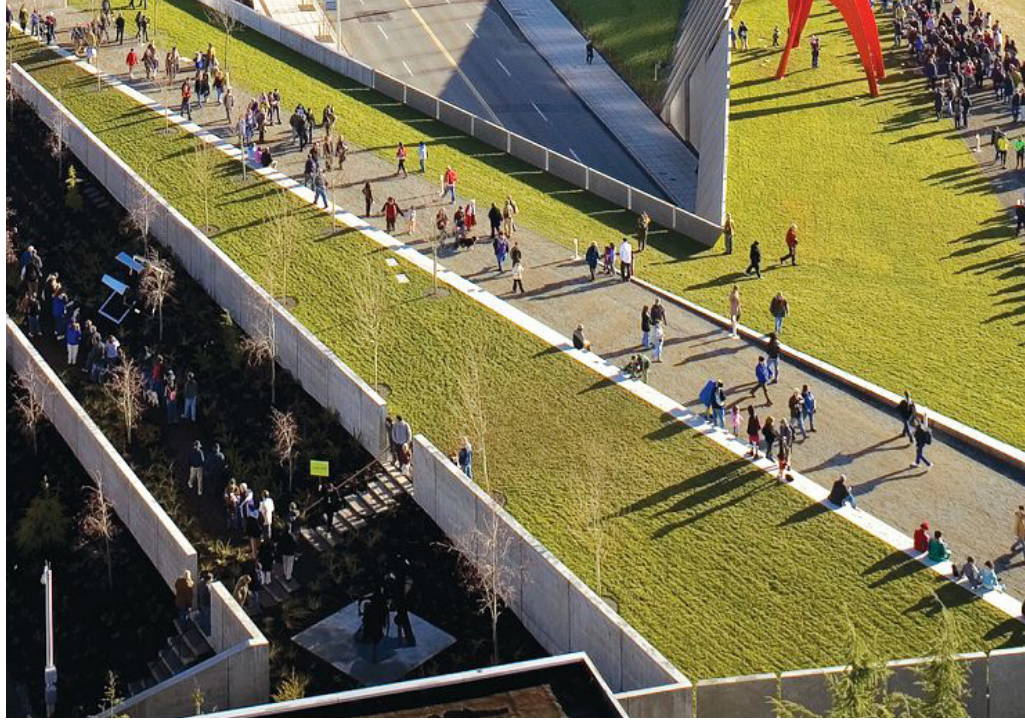
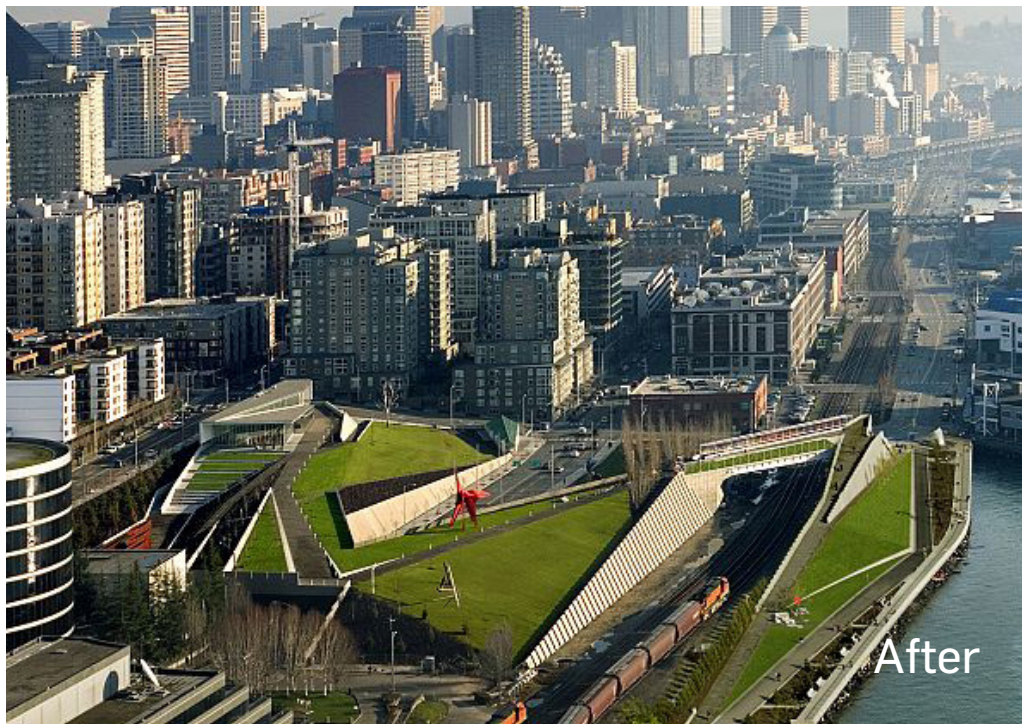
**Gateway Arch Park Renovation** (St. Louis, MO)  
A public park spanning over a highway to connect to the waterfront



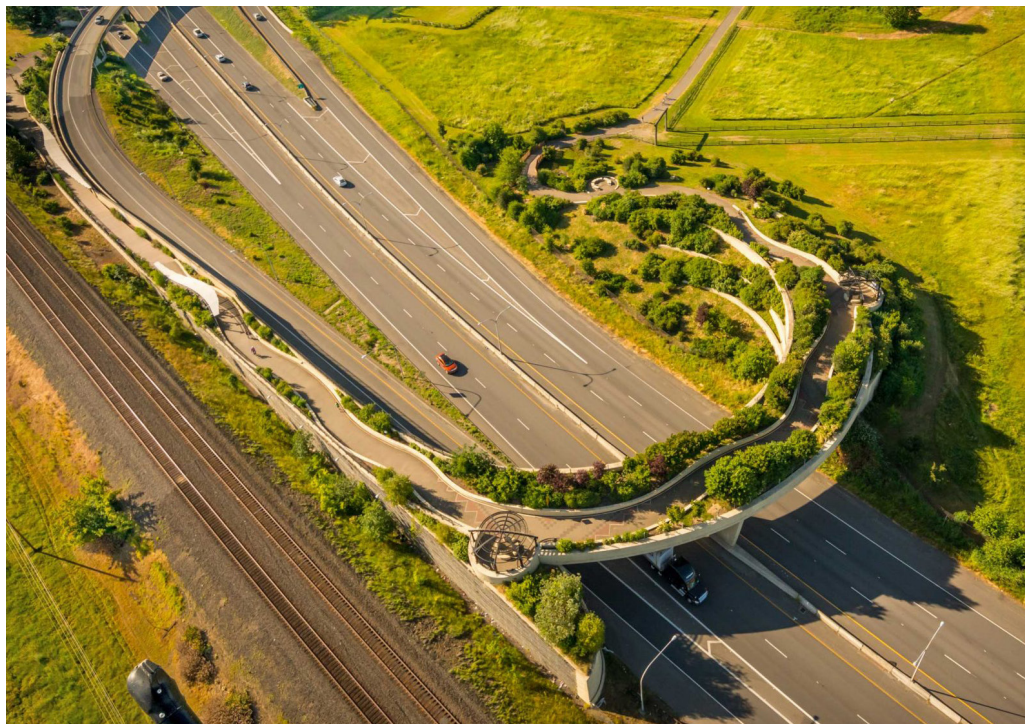
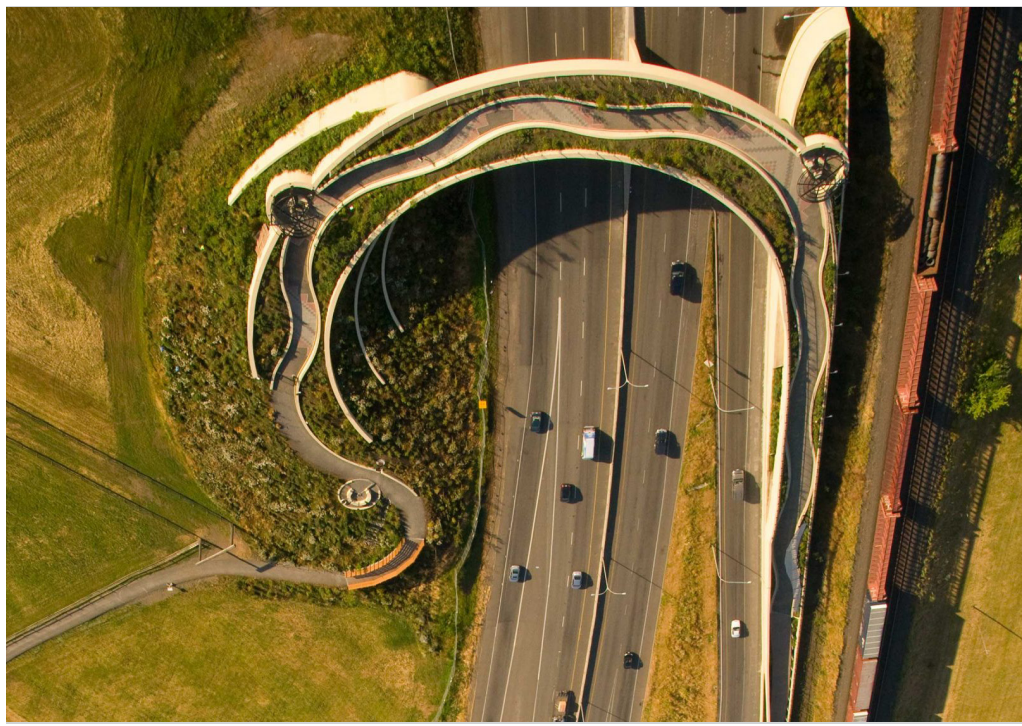
**Hardberger Park Land Bridge** (San Antonio, TX)  
A park that bridges pedestrian and wildlife activity over a parkway



**Rose Kennedy Greenway** (Boston, MA)  
An elevated highway converted into parkland, below grade highway, and local roads



**Seattle Olympic Sculpture Park** (Seattle, WA)  
A public park spanning over a highway to connect to the waterfront



**Klyde Warren Park** (Dallas, TX)  
A trenced highway converted into parkland, local roads, and below grade parking

**Vancouver Land Bridge** (Vancouver, Canada)  
An earth-covered pedestrian bridge linking trail to parkland and waterfront

Place a sticker next to ideas that inspire you!



# Your BQE Postcard

Take a postcard. Draw or write your BQE Story. Pin it to the board to share!



# Your BQE Questions

Take a notecard. Write any questions or comments you have about the BQE, community workshops, upcoming design and construction processes, and more.



Corridor Vision

# BQE CENTRAL

Workshop #1

