



Corridor Vision

Central Round 1 Update: Imagining A Vision

November 2022



Imagining A Vision

BQE Corridor Vision activities have produced a variety of important feedback. Some of the overall feedback that the New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) has heard so far includes:

- Use this opportunity for a visionary, forward-thinking project for generations to come, that reconnects our communities and open space in an accessible and resilient way, while reducing pollution, noise, and traffic and negative health impacts and respecting the historic nature of the Promenade.
- Reduce or obscure the physical presence of the BQE, by covering the highway by capping, burying, tunneling, or removing the BQE and create new opportunities for open space.
- Focus on reducing community impacts.
- Be very transparent about the pros and cons of recommended design options, including if NYC DOT is or is not making certain recommendations.

Background

NYC DOT is actively engaging communities along the BQE corridor in Brooklyn in a BQE Corridor Vision process. The BQE Central engagement process will identify potential alternatives for the City-owned structure from Atlantic Avenue to Sands Street, while the BQE North and South engagement process will identify potential longer-term projects for the other State-owned sections of the BQE corridor in Brooklyn. New Federal funds, available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, provide an exciting opportunity to upgrade the BQE for the 21st Century.

BQE Corridor-wide Kick-off

Engagement for the BQE Corridor Vision began with two corridor-wide virtual kickoff meetings, held virtually on September 28, 2022 and October 6, 2022. About 250 members of the public attended these events, and translation services were offered in Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Polish, Arabic, and Yiddish. On October 11, 2022, NYC DOT held a virtual meeting with the Community Visioning Council, a set of community and civic stakeholders who will help advise on project engagement and serve as ambassadors to their communities. [Learn more about the Community Visioning Council.](#)

BQE Central Engagement Round 1 Context and Summary

Following the Corridor-wide Kick-Off, NYC DOT and the consultant team launched BQE Central workshops with virtual and in-person engagements. On October 13, 2022, an in-person Central-focused workshop was hosted at New York City College of Technology, with about 50 members of the public attending. A virtual workshop, which focused on the BQE Central section, was held on October 18, 2022 with about 125 members of the public in attendance. Translation services were offered in Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Arabic.

BQE Central Workshops

The October 13 and October 18 workshops were designed to facilitate an introduction to the BQE Corridor Vision, with emphasis on the BQE Central section, and begin the process of soliciting feedback to help inform project concepts.

To provide background on the BQE, workshops included information on the history of the BQE, its role in regional freight and transportation, past plans and concepts for the section, structural considerations, and some of the potential trade-off considerations.

In order to help inspire the visioning process, the workshops also shared information on transformational projects on other roadways around the country. Attendees were encouraged to share feedback on those concepts and to pinpoint areas of the BQE Central section where they see challenges and opportunities.

The [full set of materials](https://www.bqevision.com) can be viewed online at www.bqevision.com.

A Central-focused in-person workshop was held on October 13, 2022 at the New York City College of Technology in Brooklyn.



Feedback from Participants

Feedback was gathered through this effort and has been synthesized into several main categories and observations.

Parks, Open Space, Street Safety, and Quality of Life

- Facilitate new connections and access points, such as from the Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, and Brooklyn Heights and Dumbo to Brooklyn Bridge Park, such as a bridge from the Promenade at Montague Street or the fruit streets (Cranberry Street, Orange Street, or Pineapple Street).
- Use this opportunity to improve the Atlantic Avenue BQE underpass and surrounding area, as well as the northern entrance to Brooklyn Bridge Park, including around Old Fulton Street.
- Focus on reducing conflicts and crashes and improving pedestrian and cyclist access to Brooklyn Bridge Park, including through lighting and street furniture improvements, and to help reduce reliance on Joralemon and Furman Streets for park access.
- Investment in nearby parks and open space are critical, such as improvements at Van Voorhees Park, Adam Yauch Park, the Promenade, the Fruit Streets Sitting Area, Harry Chapin Playground, and Hillside Dog Run, as well as public access to Anchorage Plaza.
- Make equity, sustainability, and resiliency central to planning, recognizing that historic investment in parks and open space along the full BQE has not been equitable or accessible to all. The area around BQE Central has a significant amount of open community space and the City should consider expanding public space along all sections of the Brooklyn BQE corridor.
- Explore ways to increase and improve mobility and reduce vehicular reliance through design and policy, including through expanding cycling, pedestrian access, and increasing public transit options and increasing accessibility to existing options.
- Focus on noise attenuation and mitigation during construction and permanently, such as by using berms.
- Address vibrations from the BQE on residential buildings now, potentially through banning trucks from the BQE's left lane.
- Minimize pollution caused by traffic on the BQE.

Traffic and Freight

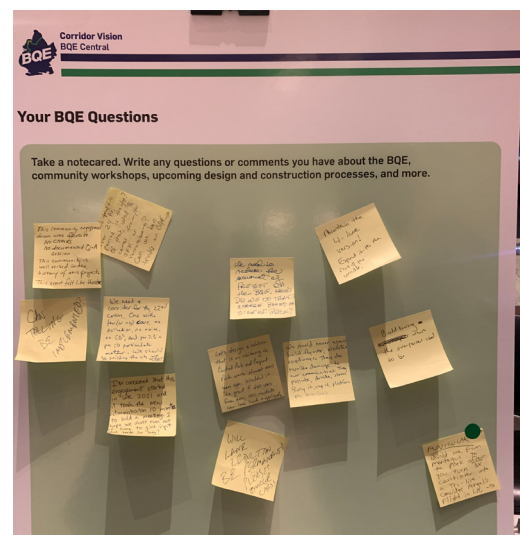
- Reduce reliance on trucks (and their impacts), including by shifting freight activity to the water, rails, cargo bikes, or other methods.
- Explore solutions like making the BQE truck-only (particularly off-peak).
- Consider tolling and other demand-management tools to help reduce vehicular use and finance improvements.
- Feedback was mostly in favor of the lane reduction at the Triple Cantilever from 6 to 4 lanes, but concerns were also raised about the impact of lane reduction on traffic on local roads and the ability to move freight.
- Move towards smaller trucks, and expand enforcement, including through continued weigh-in-motion implementation. Also consider mechanisms to have companies like Amazon shoulder some of the responsibility and costs.

Land Use and Development

- Ensure any plans minimize impacts on local residences, and do not infringe on private property.
- Explore the opportunity to incorporate affordable and/or senior housing, community centers, or other community benefits into design, while balancing concerns about overdevelopment.



Participants were encouraged to pinpoint issues and opportunities during the in-person workshop.



Participants provided questions and comments about the project.

Lessons Learned

The first round of workshops and Community Visioning Council engagement provided feedback on ways to improve BQE engagement going forward. There was a strong interest in having more break-out group style facilitated conversations opportunities for questions and answers, and group conversations. In response to this feedback after the first in-person workshop, NYC DOT and its consultant team moved towards a more facilitated interactive format for the second workshop and included question and answer opportunities. This approach received positive feedback. As further rounds of engagement proceed, NYC DOT and its consultant team will continue to fine-tune engagement approaches based on feedback received.

What's Next

In November, NYC DOT and its consultants will kick off Round 1 of BQE North and South engagement, focused on “Imagining A Vision” for both of those corridors and will launch the Community Partners program. In December, the team will hold Round 2 of BQE Central engagement to begin “Shaping Ideas” for this area. This will include sharing preliminary conceptual designs for community feedback, and a transparent explanation and discussion of DOT’s choices in moving forward with these concepts. Throughout this process, NYC DOT and its consultants will continue to engage the Community Visioning Council, community partners, and focus groups to expand engagement reach.

Upcoming meetings

- Thursday, November 3: BQE North and South Workshop 1 (virtual)
- Monday, November 7: BQE South Workshop 1 (in-person)
- Thursday, November 10: BQE North Workshop 1 (in-person)
- Tuesday, December 13: BQE Central Workshop 2 (in-person)
- Thursday December 15: BQE Central Workshop 2 (virtual)

The project website www.bqevision.com outlines upcoming meetings and opportunities for engagement, methods to share feedback, and contains project materials.

Note: This document reflects the feedback from the meetings in summary format and is not a full transcription of feedback received.