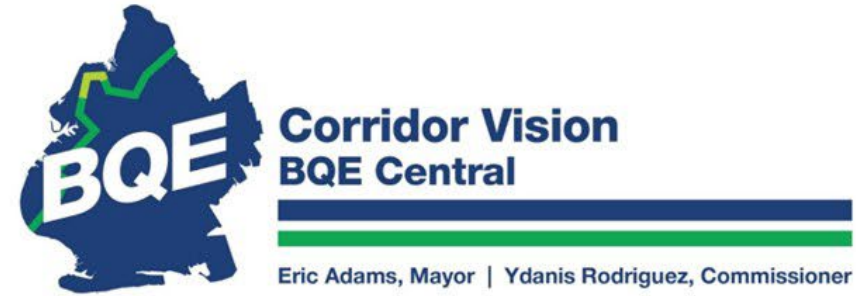


BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange






April 4, 2024



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

NYC DOT is sharing updated concepts and want to understand how the community feels about these possibilities. Residents and community stakeholders will have additional opportunities, including through the environmental review process, to continue to weigh in on the final designs

Agenda

-  **1** What We Heard from the Community So Far
-  **2** Setting Priorities
-  **3** Exploring Design Concepts
-  **4** Questions & Answers
-  **5** Workshop Activity / Breakout Groups



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

When Mayor Adams took office, he asked DOT to take a fresh look at the BQE corridor, with an eye toward equity.

We are pursuing a long-term fix for the city-owned portion of the BQE in Brooklyn, including the triple cantilever – the area from Atlantic Avenue to Sands Street, highlighted here in dark blue (#4).

At the same time, NYC DOT is taking a bold, corridor-wide approach to identify potential solutions for the entire BQE corridor in Brooklyn and reconnect communities divided by the state-owned sections of this highway.

This presentation is focused on the BQE area immediately surrounding the Manhattan Bridge intersection.

BQE Vision Overview



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

The BQE Central project focuses on the urgency of maintaining a safe City-owned section while undertaking visioning work for the entire corridor, with consideration for sustainable design, and centering equity.

We also have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to leverage federal dollars to make these needed repairs and improvements. Our overall timeline is ambitious and is being driven by federal grants that we'd like to apply for and the overall environmental review and approval timeline.

We don't want to miss this chance to access transformative federal infrastructure dollars for New Yorkers during the current administration.

For example, the US Department of Transportation recently awarded a \$5.6 Million grant under the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods program to help the NYC and NYS Departments of Transportation to advance concepts to reimagine the future of the BQE in North and South Brooklyn. We look forward to pursuing additional grants for the BQE Corridor this year.

And most importantly, this project only succeeds through a community-driven process: one that is inclusive, transparent, and consistent.

Project Focus and Engagement Approach



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.

Community Engagement will inform Mayor Adams' & NYCDOT's decisions about future investments



Inclusive



Transparent



Consistent



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5



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

NYC DOT's goal is to hear from as many people as possible.

In addition to our active Community Visioning Council, NYC DOT is working with 16 community partners, who were selected to support an outreach strategy along the corridor.

Over the past year, these partners spread the word about the project and connected directly with their own constituents and networks to gather feedback through over 100 grassroots engagement events.

NYC DOT also hosted a series of topical working groups with subject matter experts to discuss significant policy questions related to topics such as safety, traffic, public space, and environmental justice.

A summary of findings from community partners and focus groups can be found on our website at nyc.gov/bqe.

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 Focused 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



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

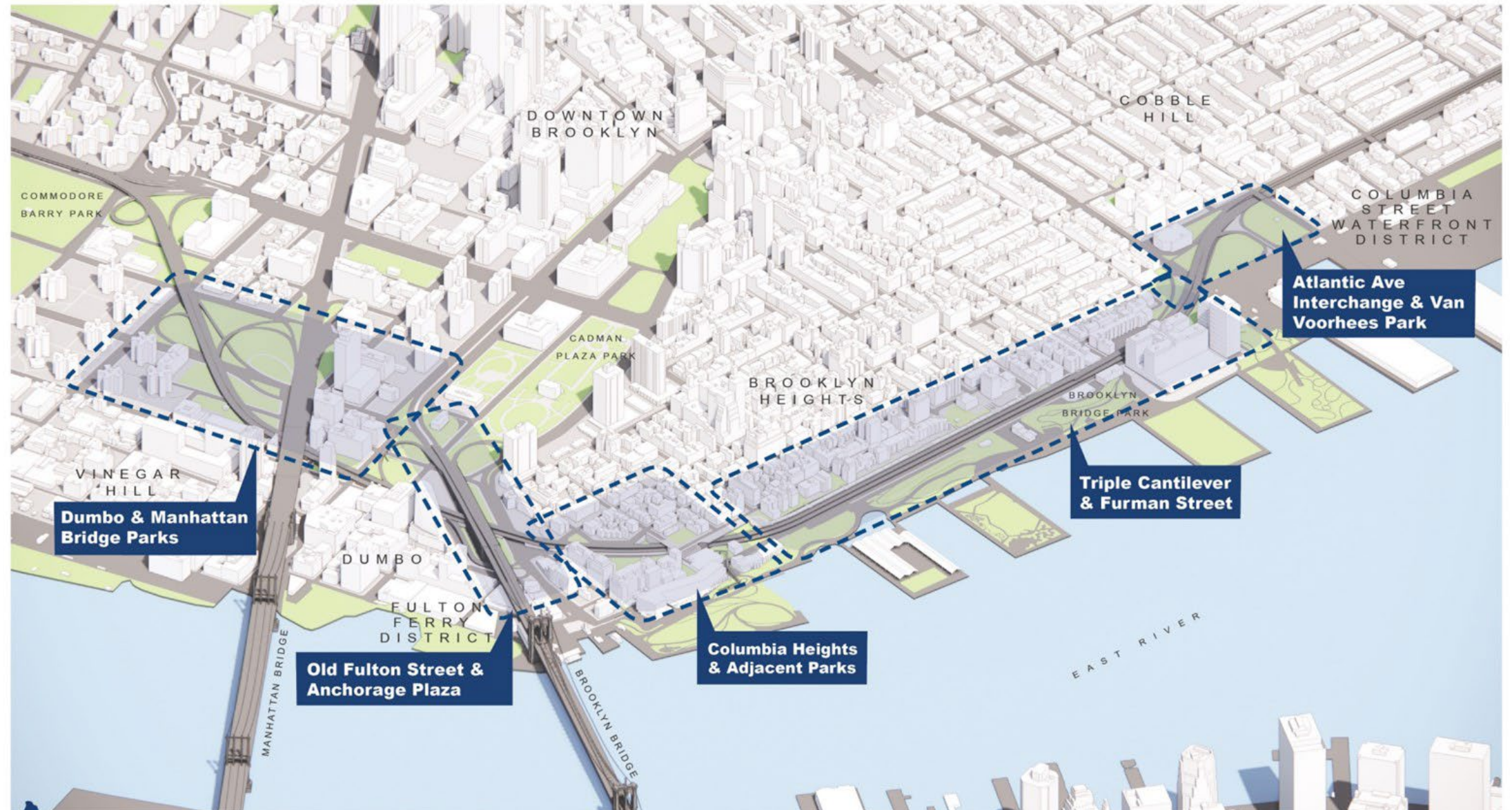
Within the BQE Central project area, there are five distinct project focus areas. Since Autumn 2022, we have completed three rounds of workshops for zones throughout BQE Central. All materials are on the DOT website.

We will discuss the area of BQE Central around the Manhattan Bridge, and we will host additional public workshops on other areas of BQE Central this year.

The goal is to begin the environmental review process at the end of this year, incorporating feedback from these meetings and the results of an ongoing corridor-wide traffic study.

Throughout this process, we will continue to seek public input, including through the structured federally mandated environmental review process.

BQE Central Focus Areas



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

The workshop's focus is on the BQE around the Manhattan Bridge, including the surrounding streets and open spaces like the Bridge Parks, Lyons Park, McKinney Steward Park, and Trinity Park.

After the last round of workshops, residents and local stakeholders had additional ideas and open questions about this area that NYC DOT wanted to explore further.

There are many competing priorities in this area: NYC DOT aims to highlight the tradeoffs and benefits of all concepts shown.

DUMBO & Manhattan Bridge Parks



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7

BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

**What We Heard from the
Community So Far**

1



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

In late 2022 and in 2023, NYC DOT held workshops for the full BQE Central section. NYC DOT was also grateful for the opportunity to host smaller group meetings at Farragut Houses and Ingersoll Community Center.

During these meetings, NYC DOT gained important feedback that we have incorporated into our planning. From these conversations, the following points stood out most:

- There is a desire to better understand what NYC DOT is proposing for this area, including how a direct connection structure between the Manhattan Bridge and BQE would work, to better understand how tall it would be, what it could look like, and its implications for traffic and safety in the area.
- Participants emphasized the importance of community input and setting priorities - especially from residents of the Farragut and Ingersoll Houses
- We heard that residents are seeking improved pedestrian and cyclist connections, particularly along Sands Street;
- A lot of residents rely on buses that serve the area. We want to make access to bus stops safer, and work to improve service.
- Further, existing green spaces and parks are unwelcoming and underused. The community wants better access to and better uses of these spaces.
- Lastly, we heard concerns related to unauthorized parking in this area, as well as concerns that parking is too limited for residents.

What We Heard

April 2023 - Round 3 Workshop and Farragut House Engagement



Community Priorities

Better understand direct connection ramp structure including height, configuration & traffic implications.

Enhance crossings and make safer cyclist and pedestrian access across the area, particularly along Sands Street

Better connection between existing and proposed open spaces

Unauthorized parking concerns

Ensure access to buses & efficient bus service

More community input on community priorities, especially from Farragut and Ingersoll Houses.



The Comments on this slide are a subset of what we heard during the 3rd workshop and through other public engagement

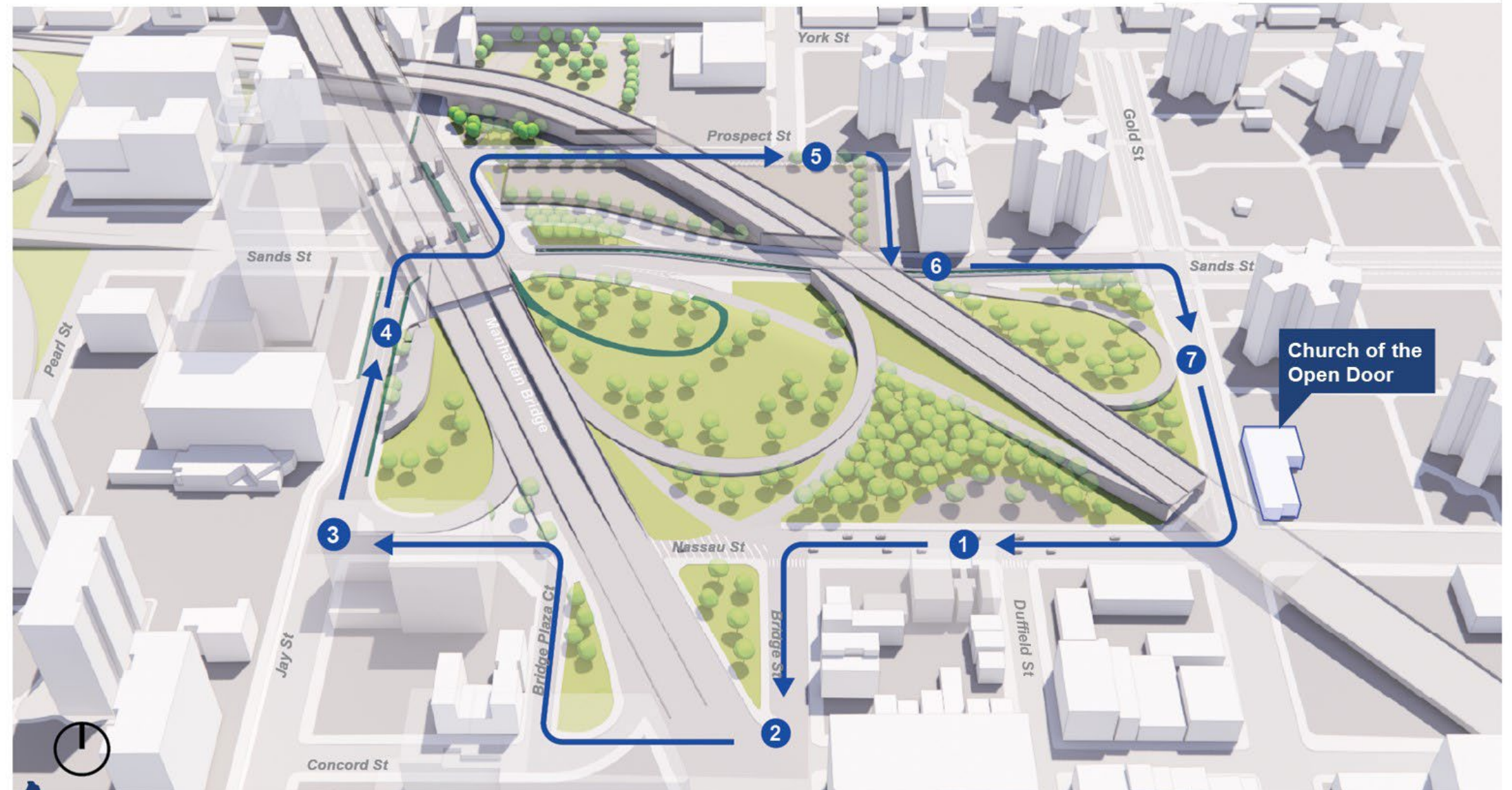
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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

We want to look at how some of these issues affect things on the ground.

What We Heard A Walk Around the Site



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Starting at Trinity Park, which is a well-used community space. However, it is not easy to get to as the only entrance is on Nassau Street. Some of the sidewalks on the north of the street are narrow, making it difficult to walk to the park, and like many places in the area, this street is often filled with illegal parking. In the design concepts, NYC DOT proposes adding a new path to the park from Sands Street underneath the existing BQE on-ramp.

Nassau, Duffield St, & Trinity Park – Facing West A Walk Around the Area



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11

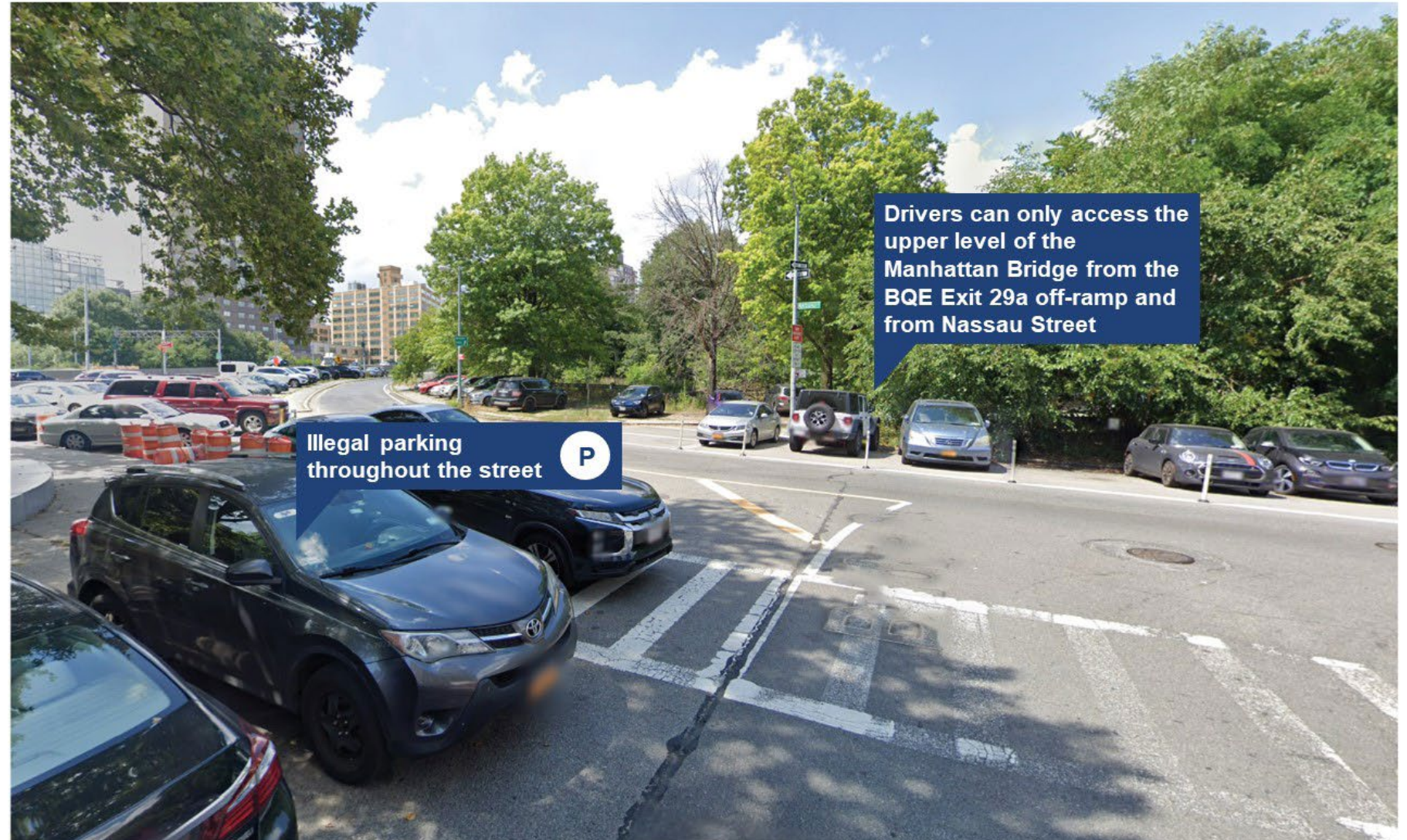
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Moving further along Nassau Street -- we are now looking north from Bridge Street. Here you can see the end of a BQE off-ramp that separates Trinity Park from the northern part of the neighborhood, and creates a series of underutilized, vacant spaces.

This area is also dominated by illegal parking.

It's also important to note that the existing ramp from the Queens-bound BQE only connects to the upper level of the Manhattan Bridge. Drivers seeking to use the lower level of the bridge currently exit the BQE at Tillary Street, which adds additional traffic in the neighborhood on Tillary Street and Flatbush Avenue. In our design concepts, we looked at ways to provide access to both levels of the Manhattan Bridge in this location to lessen local traffic.

Nassau St & Bridge St – Facing North A Walk Around the Area



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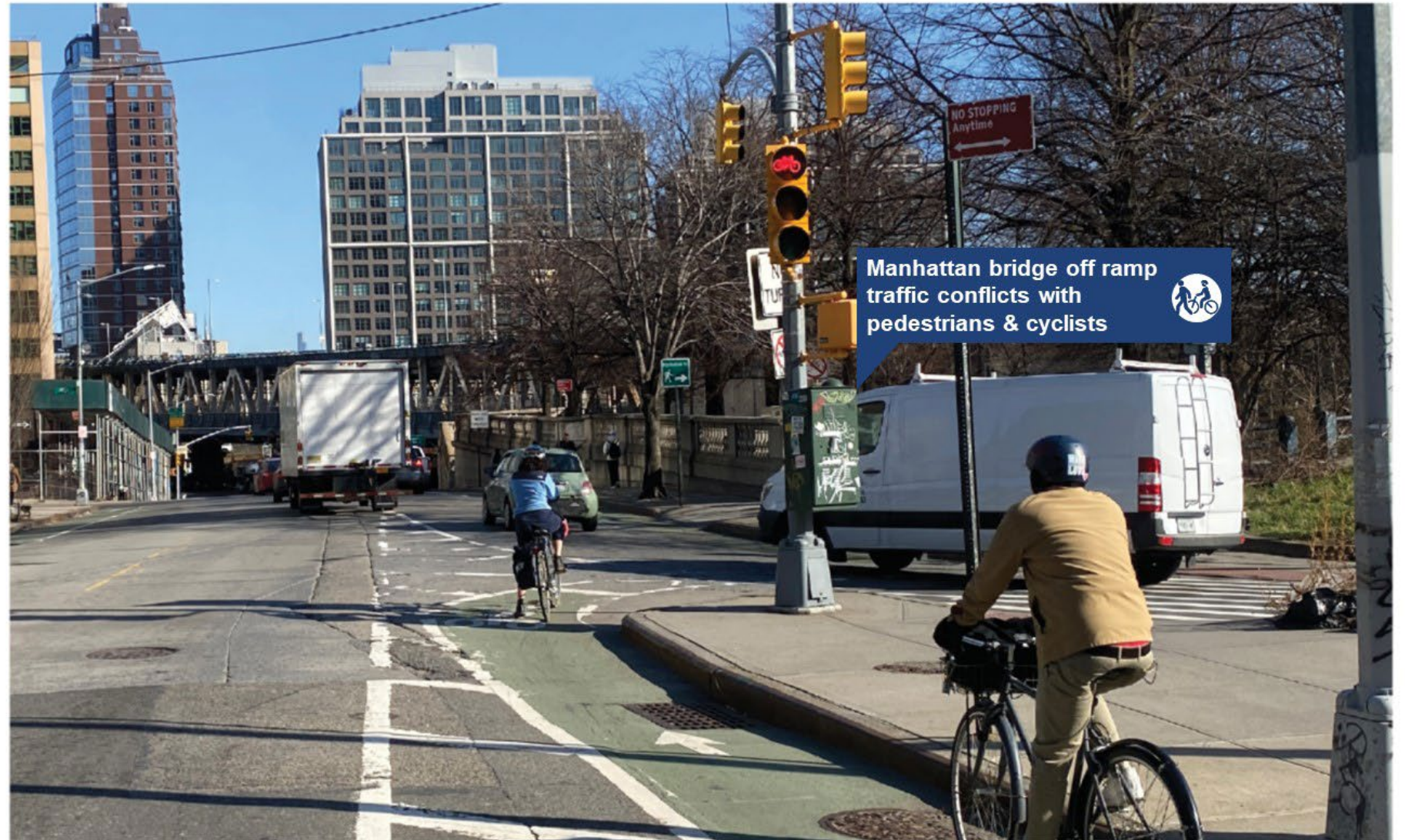
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

We are now on the other side of the Manhattan Bridge, looking north on Jay Street at Nassau Street.

There is a high volume of traffic coming off the Manhattan Bridge here, traveling to the BQE on ramps.

This highway style off-ramp creates a less comfortable crossing for pedestrians and cyclists and hampers access to the entrance to the MN Bridge pedestrian path.

Jay Street & Nassau Street – Facing North A Walk Around the Area



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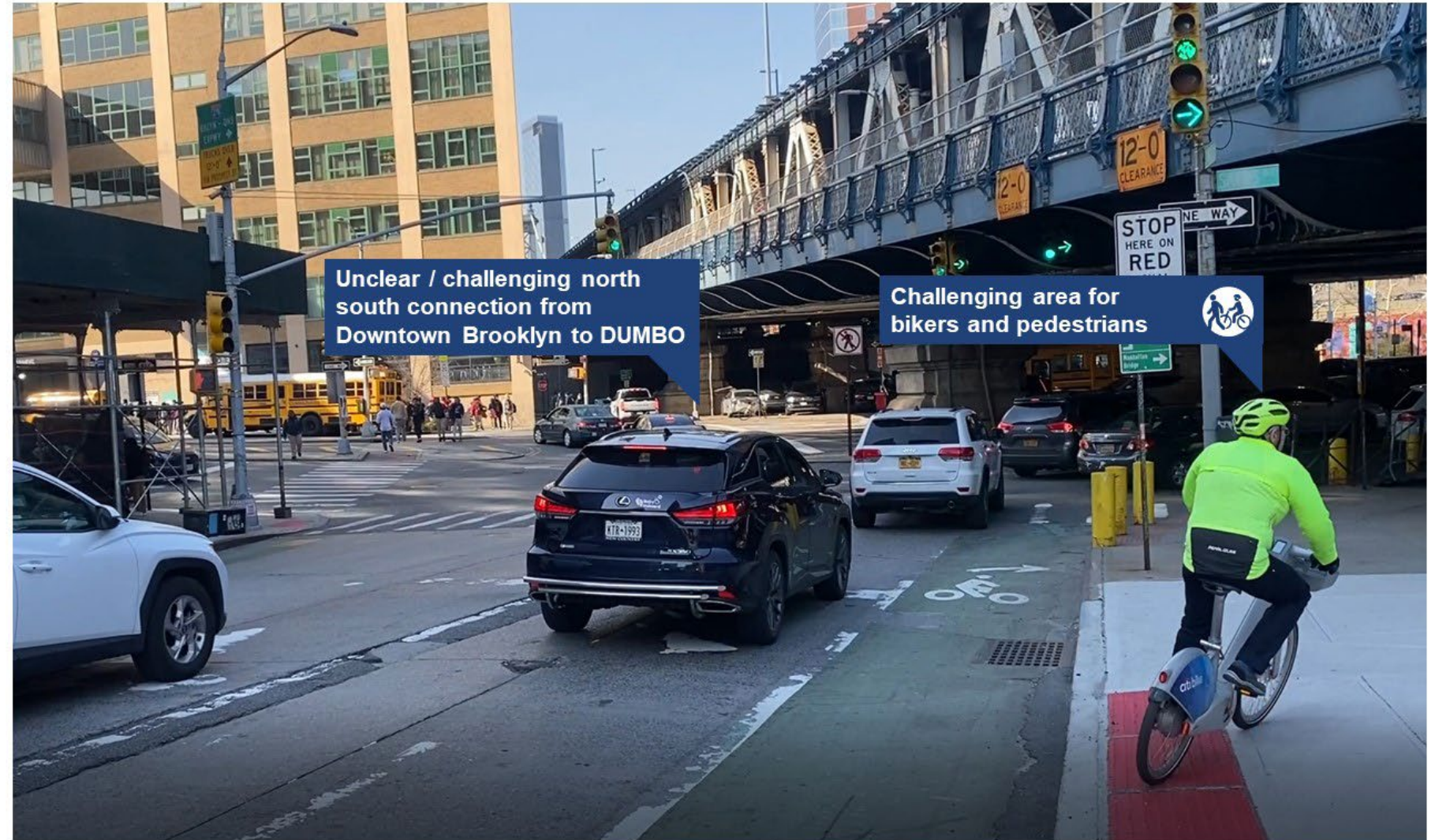
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Moving further north to the intersection below the Manhattan Bridge at Jay & Sands St. This intersection is difficult to navigate for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers and it was an area we really focused on improving in our design concepts.

Drivers have a number of turns to navigate, and the routes for pedestrians to nearby bus stops or other destinations are often unclear.

At this intersection, several bike routes converge. Even for those who know the area well, getting from one place to another can be quite challenging.

Jay Street & Sands Street – Facing North A Walk Around the Area



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

We are now on Sands St facing east toward the Navy Yard. Here, the parks have potential to be more of a community asset, but they are inaccessible, surrounded by the BQE and wide, high-traffic streets and intersections.

On Sands St, cyclists must use the shared path in the center of the street and cross a very busy intersection, going out of their way to access the Manhattan Bridge bike path.

Meanwhile, there is no pedestrian access along the south side of Sands due to the BQE on-ramps, and the bike ramp to the Manhattan Bridge. Adding pedestrian access along the south side of Sands Street is part of all of the design concepts you'll see tonight.

It is also extremely noisy here because of vehicular traffic and the B, D, N, and Q subway lines that cross the bridge.

On the whole, this area feels like it prioritizes convenience for motorists rather than access for pedestrians, cyclists, or people using the public spaces.

Sands Street & Bridge Parks – Facing East A Walk Around the Area



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange


For cyclists, the ramp to the Manhattan Bridge bike path is steep. Coming off the Manhattan Bridge, cyclists need to quickly apply their brakes to navigate a tight turn.

Between the bike ramp and Queens-bound BQE on-ramp, there's a lot of unused, inaccessible land and in our concepts, we looked at ways to open up that space for public use.

Sands St to Manhattan Bridge Bike Connection – Facing South A Walk Around the Area



 Steep and indirect bike access to the bridge with right turns

 Large areas of inaccessible or vacant open space



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Prospect Street is an east-west connection below the BQE. Here, traffic volumes are low.

The eastbound B67 bus uses this street as part of its route.

Residents provided feedback that parking here is well-used.

Prospect St West of BQE - Facing East A Walk Around the Area



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Crossing under the BQE, looking back toward the bridge on Prospect St, we see McKinney Steward Park and the playground that was rebuilt in 2022. Both are well used by the community. Maintaining connections to these community assets is important.

Within the park, a pedestrian path runs parallel to the BQE, connecting residents with the York Street F Train station and DUMBO.

Prospect St East of BQE - Facing West A Walk Around the Area



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

At the intersection of Sands and Gold Streets, you can see the BQE Staten Island-bound on-ramp. Today, this takes up a good portion of the block. If the ramp could be located elsewhere, it could become a large public space. We looked at this closely in two concepts we'll share tonight.

On the south side of Sands St, there is no pedestrian crossings at the BQE entry ramps and people crossing the street must share the path at the center of the street with cyclists or cross to the north side of the street and double back.

Finally, we wanted to highlight the bus stops in this area that we know many community members use on a daily basis. In these concepts, NYC DOT considered ways to make it easier and more comfortable to get to and from these stops.

Sands St & Gold St – Facing Southwest A Walk Around the Area



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

NYC DOT understands that this is a complex area that has challenges for everyone who travels through it – whether as a pedestrian, transit user, cyclist, or driver. NYC DOT has set priorities for these design concepts for the area.

Setting Priorities

2

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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Bridge and highway infrastructure have a significant presence in this neighborhood.

Through this visioning process, we can think of ways to better connect the neighborhood for the many people that live, work, or visit the area, use its parks, and travel through it to commute.

Reconnecting a Neighborhood Divided by the Highway



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

For this project area, NYC DOT has established the following five guiding values based on what we heard in the previous rounds of engagement. We are using these to evaluate our design concepts and ensure that they are working as well as possible for everyone:

- (1) Safety is paramount. We want to enhance safety for everyone. This includes pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, and an emphasis on more vulnerable users.
- (2) We want to reduce unnecessary traffic on local streets. This can enhance safety, improve air quality, and create a more walkable area.
- (3) We want to enhance pedestrian and cycling connections and make it easier to access transit, jobs, schools, and other important destinations.
- (4) We are looking to expand, connect, and enhance open spaces and activate underutilized land for the benefit of the community.
- (5) While we do want to improve upon some of the historic highway and ramp infrastructure, we want to be thoughtful about the creation of new infrastructure that may be considered unsightly to the community. This could include preserving views of historic assets like the Manhattan Bridge or building more visually pleasing and well-lit infrastructure.

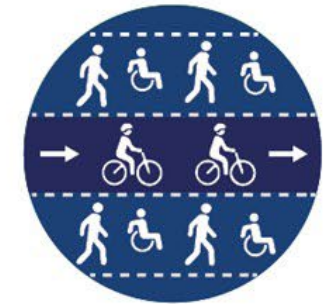
Our Guiding Values



1 Enhance safety for everyone
(pedestrians, cyclists & drivers)



2 Reduce through traffic on
local streets



3 Enhance pedestrian &
cycling connections



4 Expand connect, and
enhance open spaces &
activate underutilized spaces



5 Minimize changes
in visual character



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

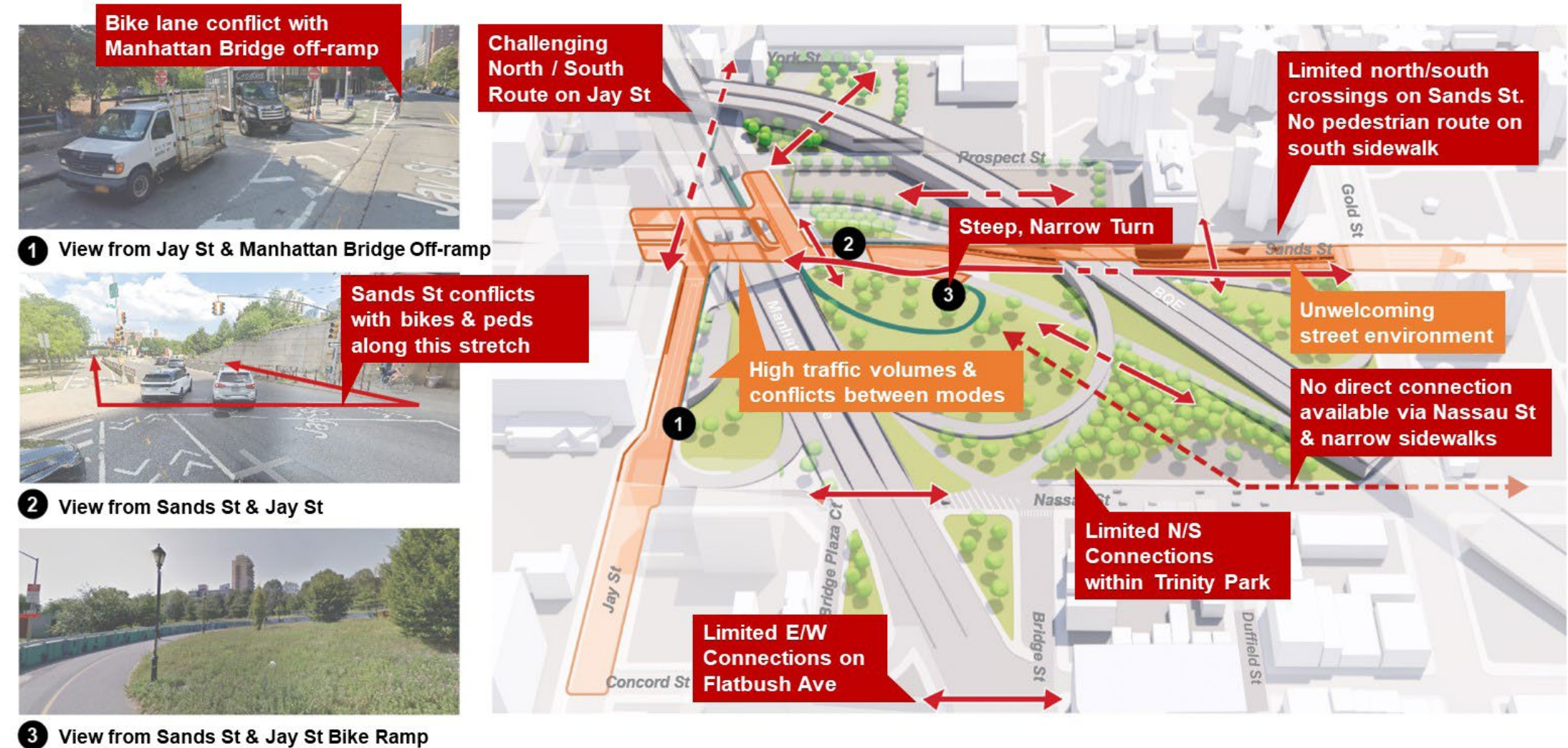
In these design concepts, NYC DOT focused on both enhancing safety for all who travel through here, and enhancing connections for all users: including pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

To accomplish this, NYC DOT looked for opportunities to redesign intersections to make them safer and make it more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists to get where they need to go, particularly in high-traffic locations such as Jay Street and Sands Street.

NYC DOT also explored ways to better connect and create sidewalks in places where existing infrastructure has created barriers, such as the south side of Sands Street and the connection from Trinity Park to the northern part of the neighborhood, which is currently cut off by the BQE off-ramp.

Similarly, NYC DOT looked for opportunities to improve cycling connections, including redesigning the steep, sharp turn of the Manhattan Bridge bike ramp, and making more direct cycling connections between Nassau Street and the bridge.

Enhance Safety & Connections For pedestrians, cyclists & drivers



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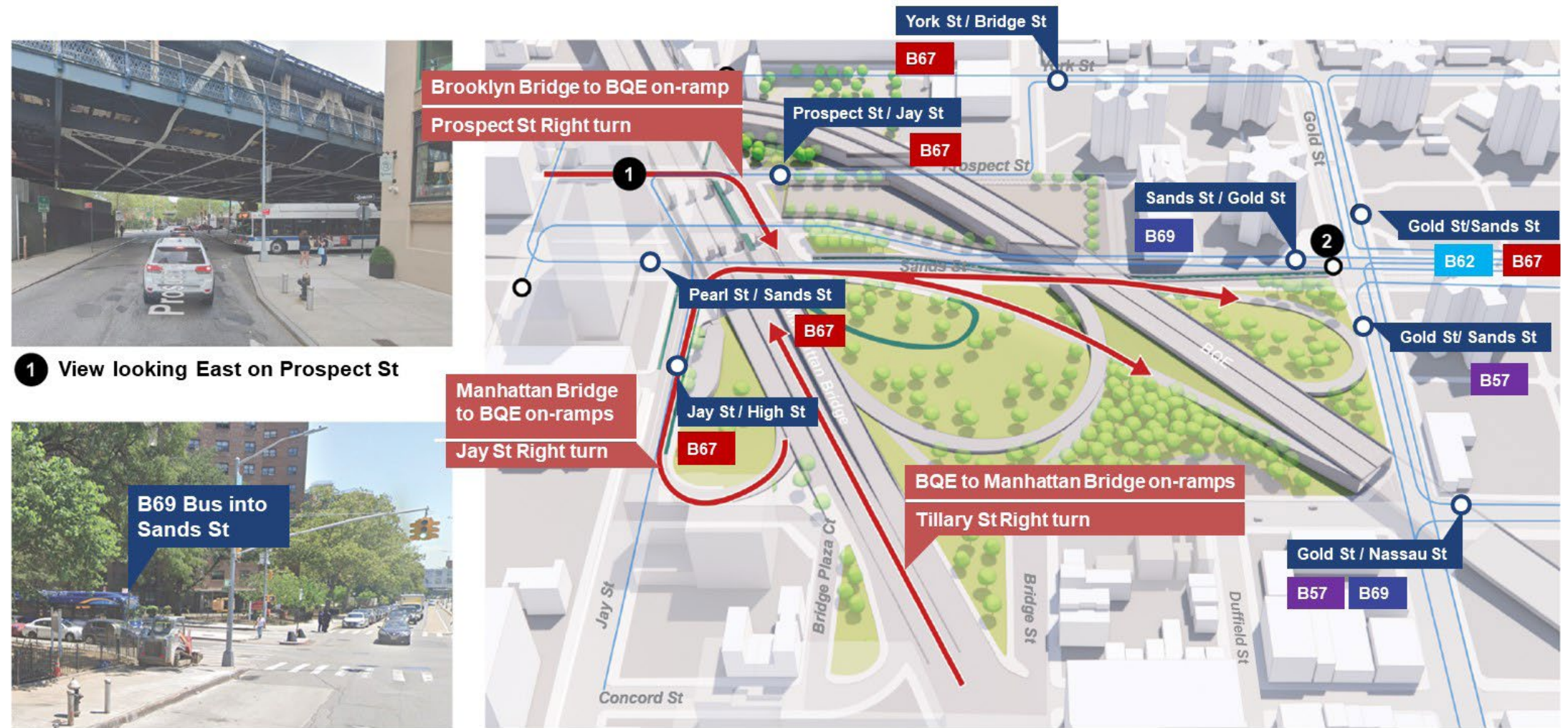
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

NYC DOT has studied ways to reduce traffic and congestion on local streets.

One of the main ways to enhance safety and comfort for everyone is to shift traffic off local streets by keeping it on the BQE where possible. Reducing congestion enables us to really reimagine challenging areas like Sands St. Some of the concepts remove more traffic than others and we will discuss the tradeoffs later in the presentation.

NYC DOT also believes that reducing traffic on local streets will help to move buses faster

Reduce Traffic on Local Streets and Move Buses From Traffic heading to / from BQE & Bridges



1 View looking East on Prospect St

2 View from Sands St & Gold St



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

At around 680,000 square feet (or the size of almost 12 football fields), there is a large amount of open space in the area. However, much of it is unused or underutilized today.

This slide shows how the project area (highlighted in yellow) compares to nearby parks – Columbus Park near Borough Hall, Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 6, and Fort Greene Park. It is a significant amount of space.

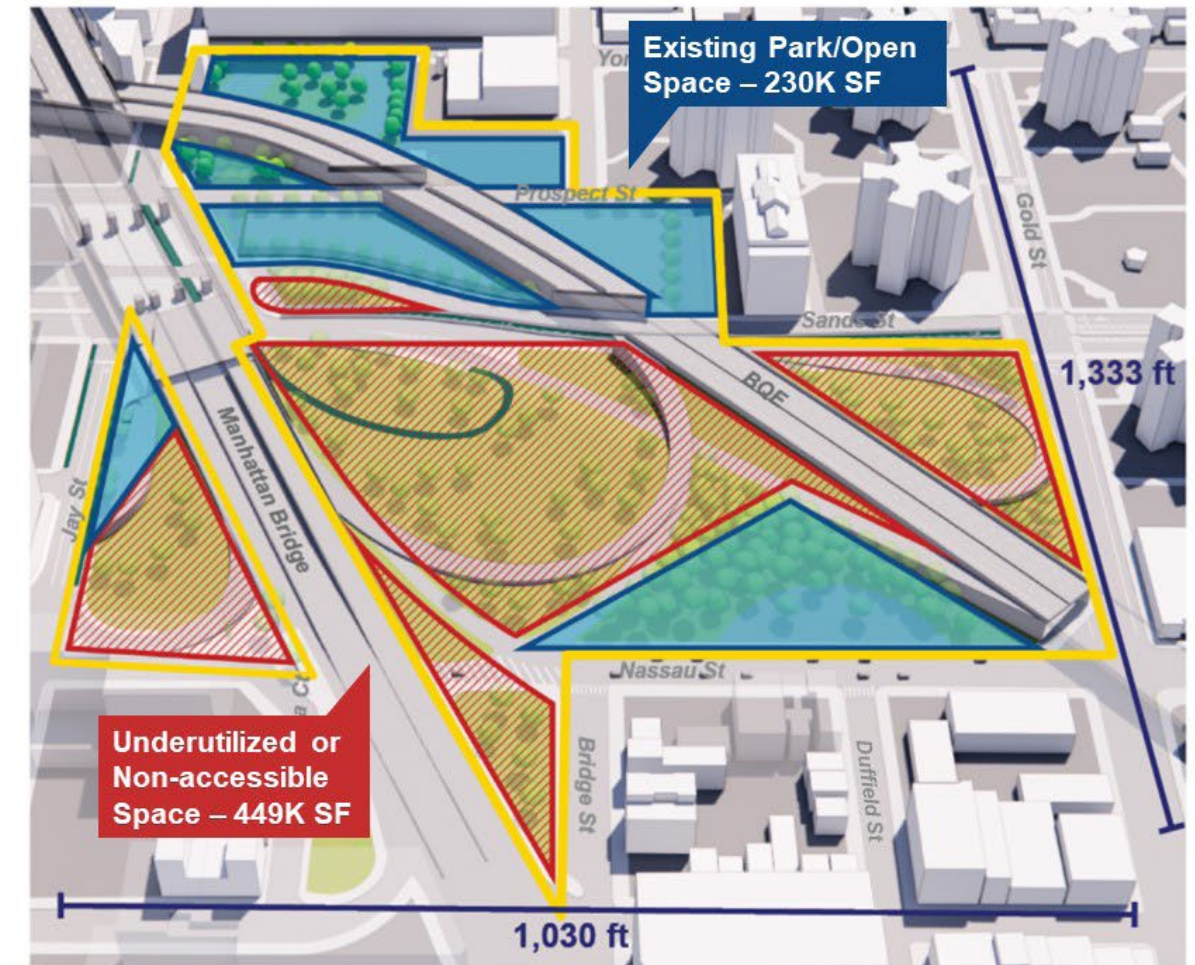
Today, 230,000 square feet (or 4 football fields,) of open space is accessible and usable by the community.

Additionally, around 450 thousand square feet (equivalent to 8 football fields) of space in this area is inaccessible or underutilized.

NYC DOT would like to create connections to the parks and open spaces that are already used by the community.

NYC DOT wants to look for ways to activate the inaccessible or underutilized spaces and find ways to create new open spaces.

Expand & Enhance Open Space / Activate Vacant & Underutilized Land



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

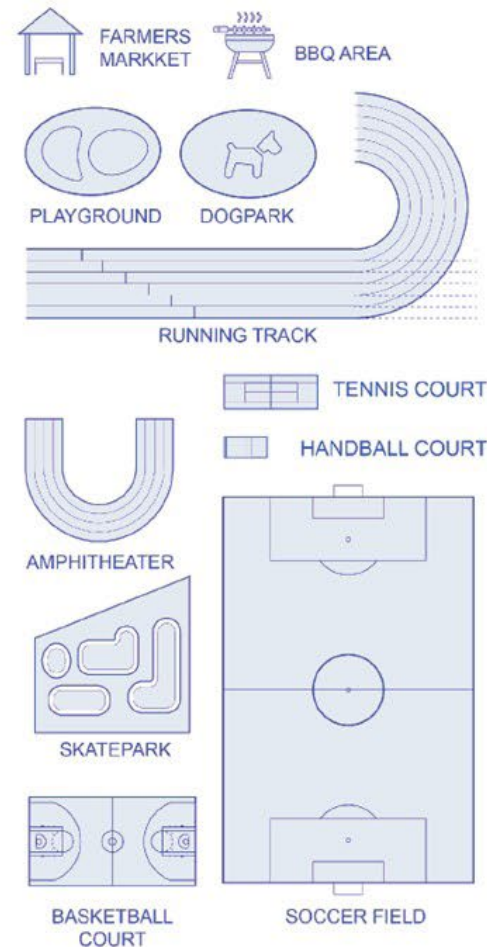
Below are some questions that we would like to hear from the community:

- What kinds of uses do you think would most benefit the community?
- Should some areas be actively programmed with sports, recreation, new farmers markets, skate parks, and amphitheaters? Should the City consider community focused developments such as affordable housing, community centers, or supermarkets?
- Or should more passive programming, such as lawns, tree groves, and community gardens be considered?
- We heard in workshops how important it is to build resilient infrastructure: so, how can we incorporate more green infrastructure including for stormwater management?
- Or do you like it the way it is?

On a related note, it's important to consider the types of uses that could be well-suited to an area that we all know is really loud with the subway crossing the Manhattan Bridge. This is something we want to discuss together tonight as well.

Expand & Enhance Open Space / Activate Vacant & Underutilized Land

Active Programming



Community Focused Development



Passive Programming



Note: Parts of this area are *really* - loud. Which uses work best here?



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Finally, NYC DOT wants to make sure that any changes considered also minimize visual impacts to the look and feel of the space, including key views from the Manhattan Bridge Plaza, looking towards Downtown Brooklyn, and the Manhattan Bridge.

For any concepts that include new structures, NYC DOT is exploring a number of ways to keep the design minimal and more aesthetically pleasing.

Minimize Changes in Visual Character

Existing Site Views



Design Opportunities



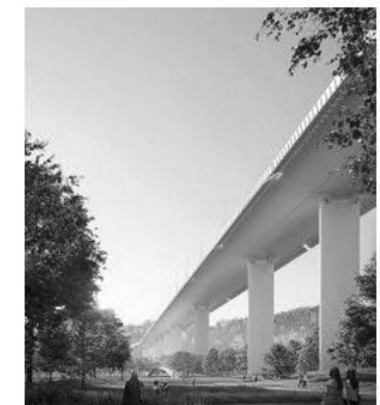
1. Thinner Deck + Deck Edge



2. Smoother + Flatter Underdeck



3. Sculptural Columns



4. More Regularity



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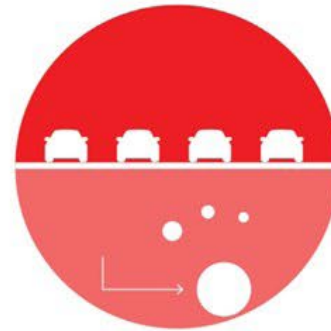
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

The design team explored a pretty exhaustive range of ideas in the brainstorming process.

As with other parts of the corridor, we kept considerations in mind that would impact the feasibility of these including conflicts with major underground infrastructure, impacts on adjacent properties, and conflicts with subway lines and stations.

For these reasons, the concepts shown on the bottom half of this slide were not pursued further. This includes putting the BQE underground, changing the basic alignment of the BQE, or turning the BQE into an at-grade boulevard.

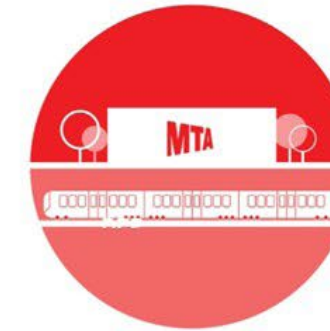
As we explore concepts for this area, we are keeping these considerations in mind...



Below grade utilities



Effects on private property



MTA facilities

These concepts posed serious engineering challenges...



BQE below grade



Relocating the
BQE right of way



At-grade boulevard



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

NYC DOT will now explore three design concepts that set out to achieve our goals.

Exploring Design Concepts

3

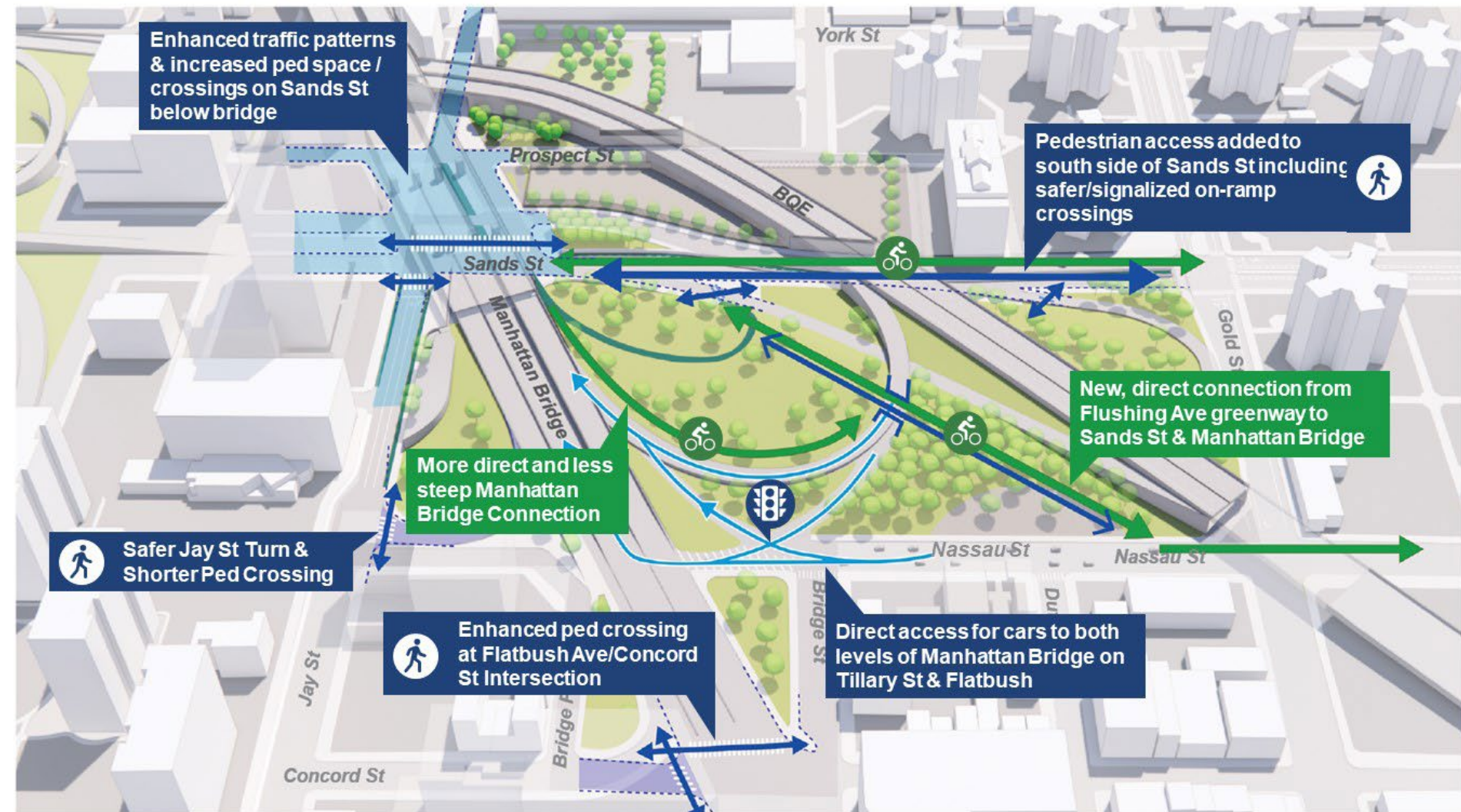


BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Ideas that can be applied to all concepts include enhance traffic safety in this area for everyone; create more direct and convenient connections for pedestrians and cyclists; and make the area easier to navigate and reduce congestion for drivers. For example:

- At the intersection of Sands & Jay St, we can streamline traffic movements and improve pedestrian crossings and navigation below the Manhattan Bridge.
- Along Sands St, we can create a continuous sidewalk along the south side. In concepts where the BQE on-ramps stay put, we can add traffic signals to provide conflict-free crossings for pedestrians. This would also allow for more seamless bike connections to the Manhattan Bridge bike path.
- In all concepts, the ramp connecting to the Manhattan Bridge bike path would be made less steep and more comfortable.
- The intersection of Jay St and the Manhattan Bridge off-ramp can be redesigned as a more comfortable intersection to help reduce conflicts and enhance safety for all users.
- Something similar can be done at the intersection of Flatbush Ave & Concord St.
- For drivers, direct access to both levels of the Manhattan Bridge from the Queens-bound BQE could be added, making it easier to get to where they are headed while reducing through-traffic on Tillary Street and Flatbush Avenue Extension – which would also benefit pedestrian safety and air quality.
- A new north-south pedestrian and bike path could link both sides of the park between Nassau and Sands Street, improving access to Trinity Park and addressing a major barrier in the neighborhood. (Note: This would require some structural changes to the BQE off-ramp to allow the park connection to extend underneath it.)

Community Benefits in All Concepts Enhance Safety for Everyone (Pedestrians, Cyclists & Drivers)



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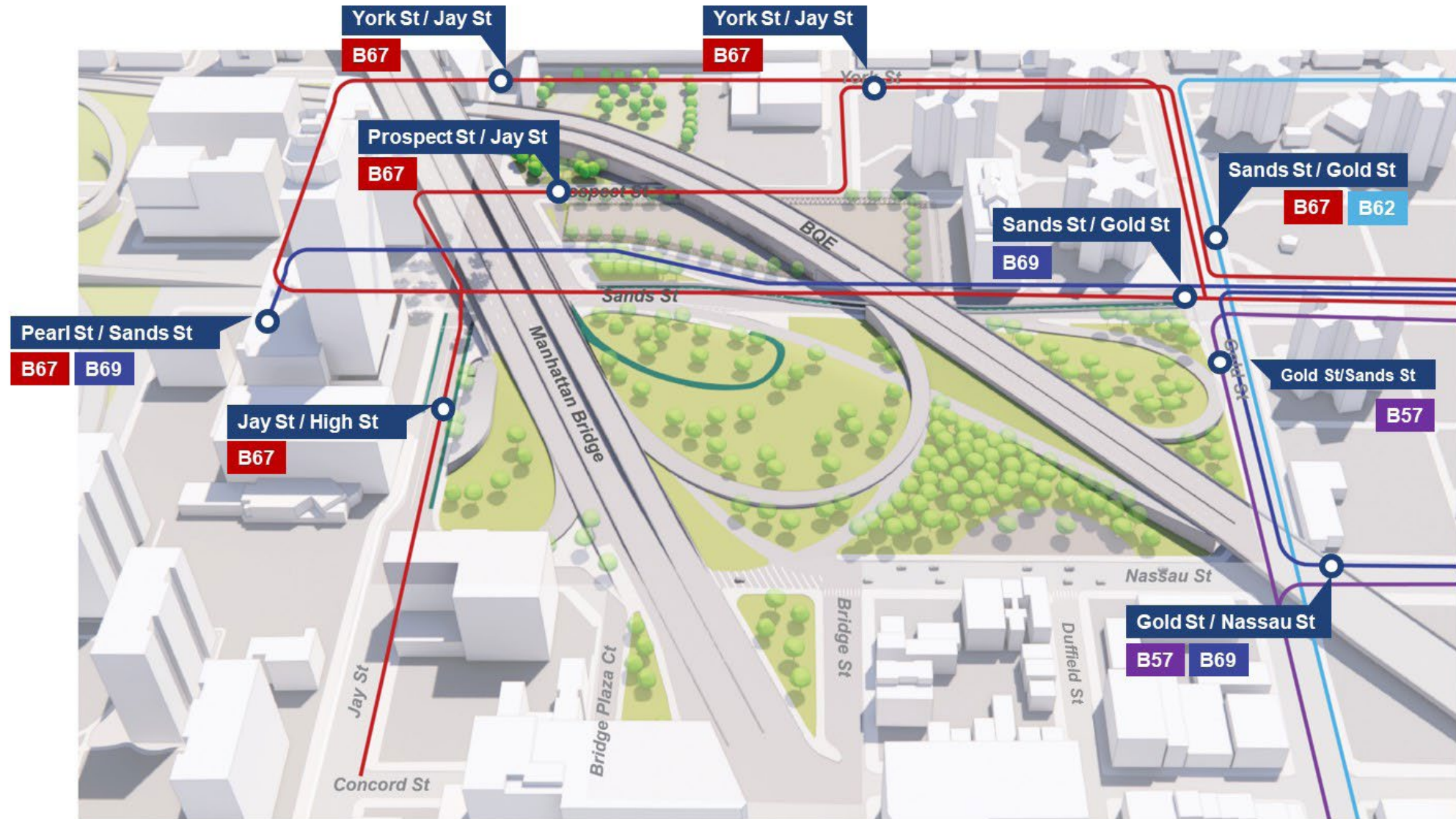


BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Anything NYC DOT can do to remove traffic from local streets that doesn't need to be there (like cars and trucks that are connecting between the BQE and the Manhattan and Brooklyn bridges), can create an opportunity to improve bus performance.

NYC DOT will look at this in more detail as we study these concepts further, in coordination with the MTA.

Community Benefits in All Concepts Speed Up Buses



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Unfortunately, there is not a perfect way to address the many roles these streets and intersections need to play. As we walk through this presentation, we will discuss the primary goals, benefits, and trade-offs of each concept.

Concept 1 looks at how to improve walking and biking, without introducing any large new infrastructure.

Concept 2 is very similar to Concept 1 but relocates the BQE Staten Island-bound on-ramp to the north side of Sands Street. This opens up a large, new open space for the community at the corner of Sands & Gold Streets, just across from the Farragut Houses.

Concept 3 adds a large new road structure, shown here in purple. This new structure will substantially reduce traffic on local streets, creating a much more comfortable environment for pedestrians and those using the bus. Like in Concept 2, the new direct connections between the Manhattan Bridge and the BQE will allow for a large new open space to be added at the corner of Sands & Golds St.

Three Roadway Configuration Concepts



Concept 1

GOAL

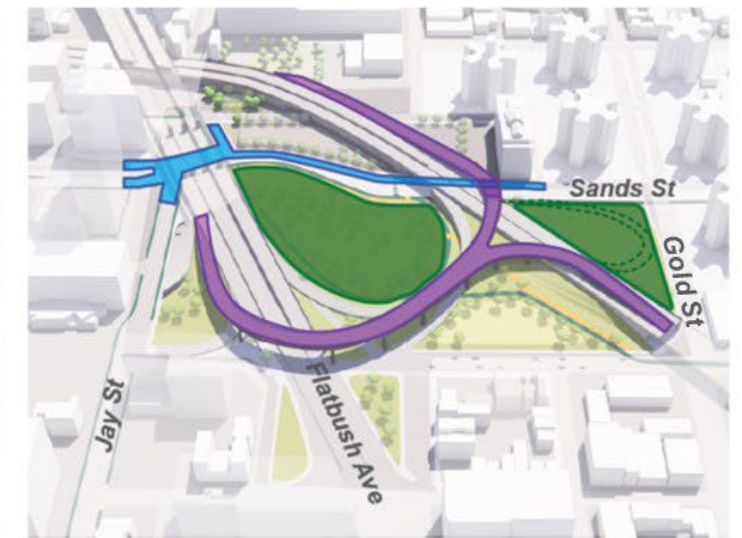
- Enhance walking & biking while avoiding new large infrastructure



Concept 2

GOAL

- Enhance local streets by enhancing safety for pedestrians and cyclists
- Create a large, new accessible open space adjacent to Farragut Houses



Concept 3

GOAL

- Substantially reduce local through-traffic with new large infrastructure, allowing for transformation of local streets for safety & comfort
 - Create a large new accessible open space adjacent to Farragut Houses



Street Level Safety Enhancements



New Direct Connections

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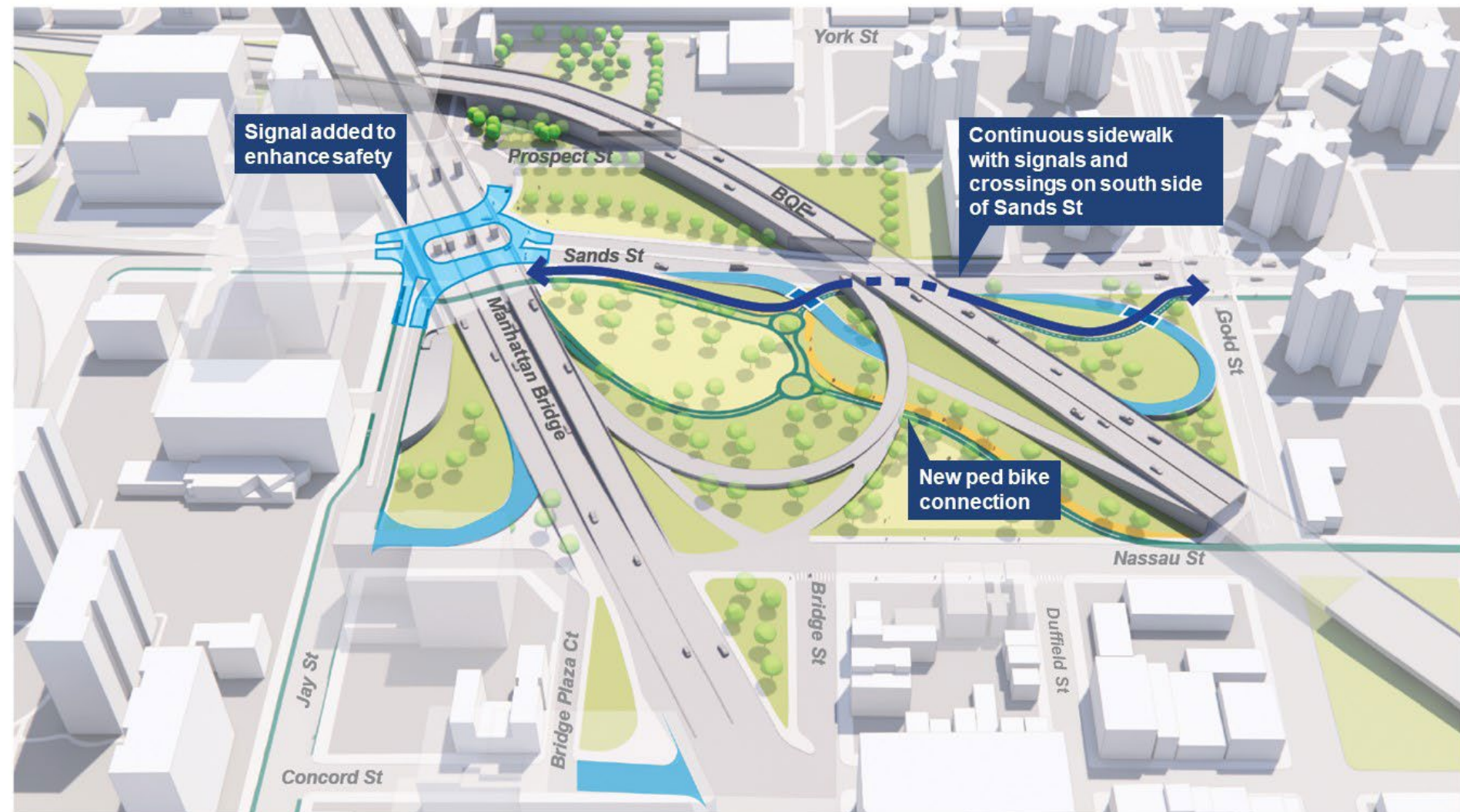
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Concept 1 takes the lightest approach and adds no major new infrastructure to the area.

This concept would make some improvements for those walking and biking including adding a continuous sidewalk and signal-controlled crossings at the BQE on-ramps along the south side of Sands St.

It also includes a redesign of the Jay and Sands Street intersection to enhance safety and walkability.

Concept Comparison – Tools to Reach Our Goals Concept 1



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For Discussion Purposes Only - Subject to Change and Refinement

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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Bridge Parks, Jay St & Sands St - Facing East

Concept 1 - Existing



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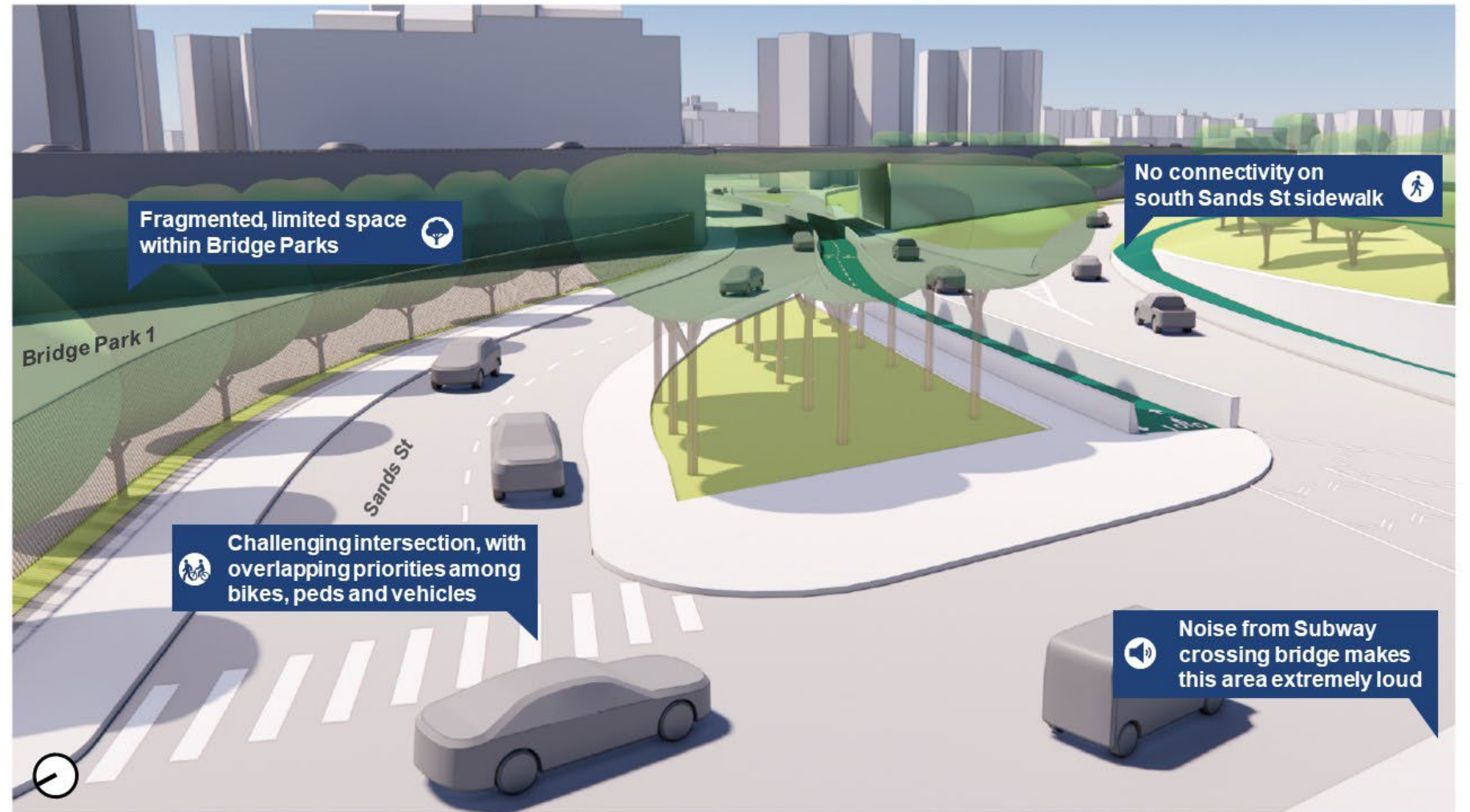
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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This shows how Bridge Parks and the intersections of Sands & Jay Streets are configured today. Note how Sands St splits near Jay St and the lack of pedestrian connections on the south side of Sands St.

Bridge Parks, Jay St & Sands St – Facing Farragut Houses (East)

Concept 1 - Existing



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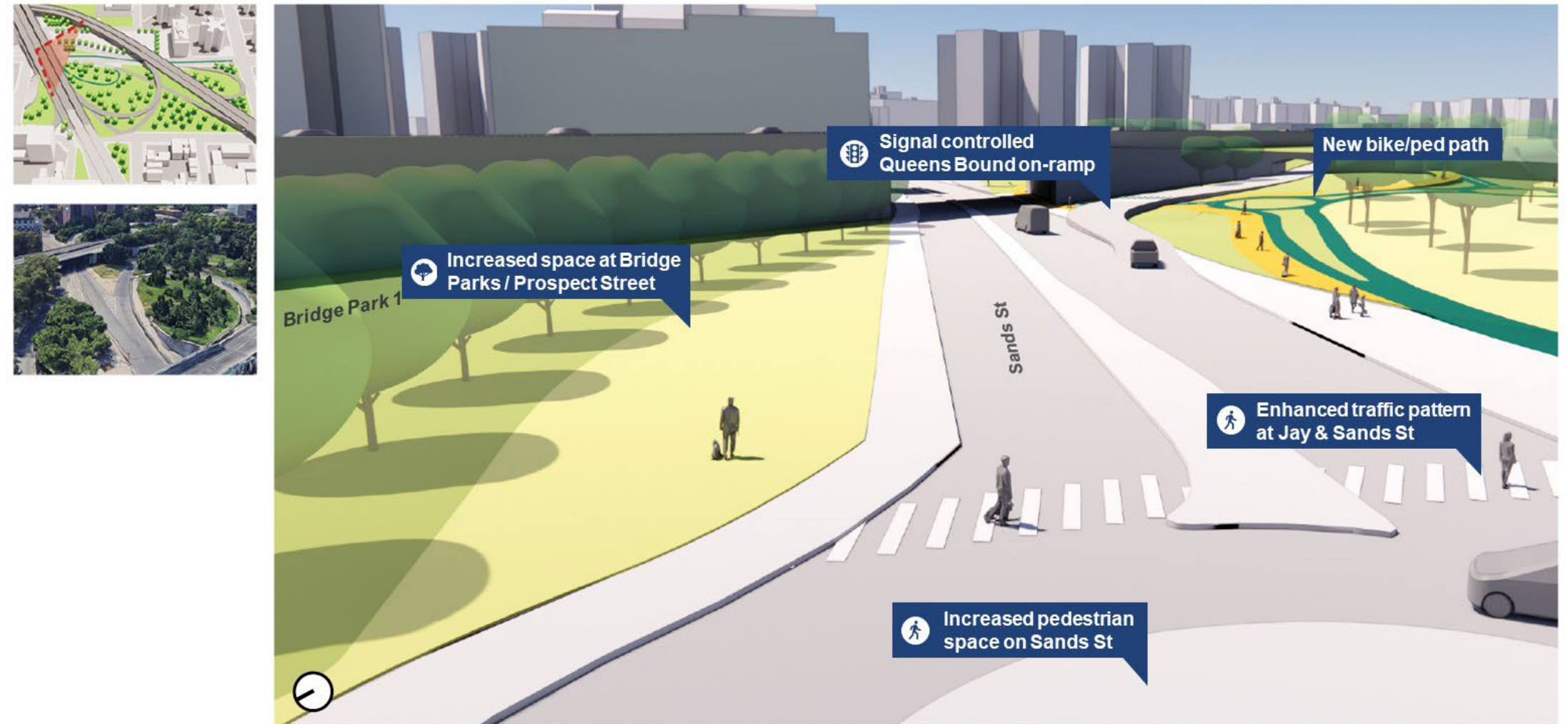
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This shows the potential traffic improvements at the intersection of Jay and Sands Streets, making it easier for cars, cyclists, and pedestrians to get through the area.

Note the extension of the sidewalk along the south side of Sands St, and the improved bike connections heading in all directions, highlighted in dark green on the right side of this image.

And note how streamlining Sands St and removing the turning lane adds some additional space to Bridge Park I.

Bridge Parks, Jay St & Sands St – Facing Farragut Houses (East) Concept 1 - Proposed



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Concept 2 is the same as Concept 1, with a few key changes.

In Concept 2, the BQE Staten Island-bound on-ramp is removed from the south side of Sands Street and relocated to the north side of the street.

Relocating the ramp makes a full half block of land on the corner of Sands Street and Gold Street available to be reimagined as a new community asset. This space is equivalent in size to a football field.

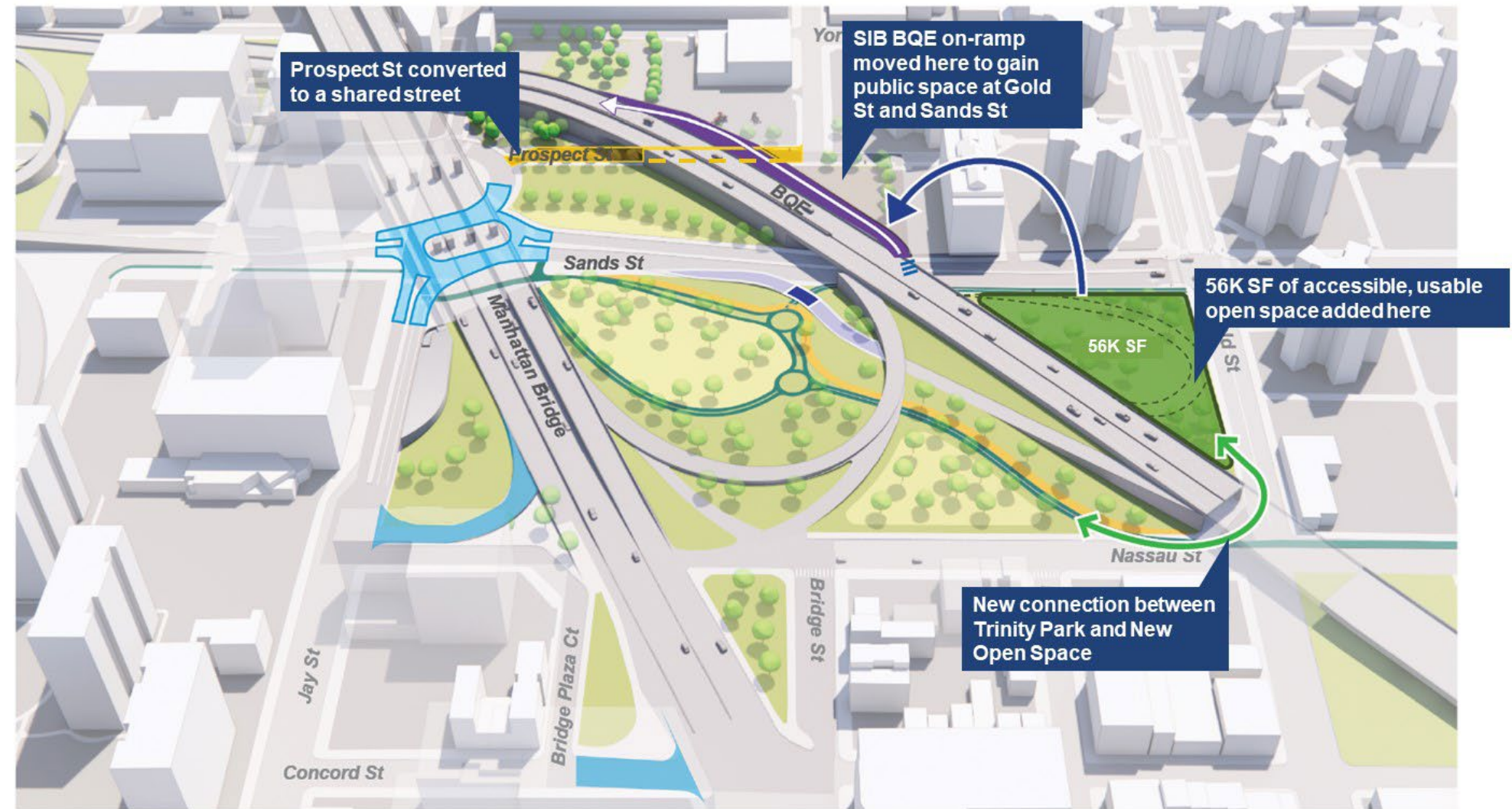
Here, there is also an opportunity to connect the new open space with Trinity Park by using the unused space under the BQE at Nassau Street.

One tradeoff to consider is that the new ramp would need to be constructed over a portion of Bridge St Park and McKinney Steward Park at Prospect Street. This would add additional traffic, along with noise, closer to the park and other buildings in the area. So, while this concept would allow us to create a significantly larger new open space south of Sands, it would come with the trade-off of adding a ramp along the existing park.

If this option is pursued, it would also require that Prospect Street be closed to vehicular traffic and become pedestrianized. This is due to the overhead clearance at the bridge, which would be reduced by the construction of the on-ramp. While this would make the street safer for pedestrians, it could make things less convenient for some drivers and could impact on-street parking.

It would also require a slight rerouting of the B67 bus heading eastbound.

Concept Comparison – Tools to Reach Our Goals Concept 2



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This is a view of Prospect St facing west towards the BQE as it exists today.

Prospect Street - Facing the BQE, Looking West Concept 2 - Existing



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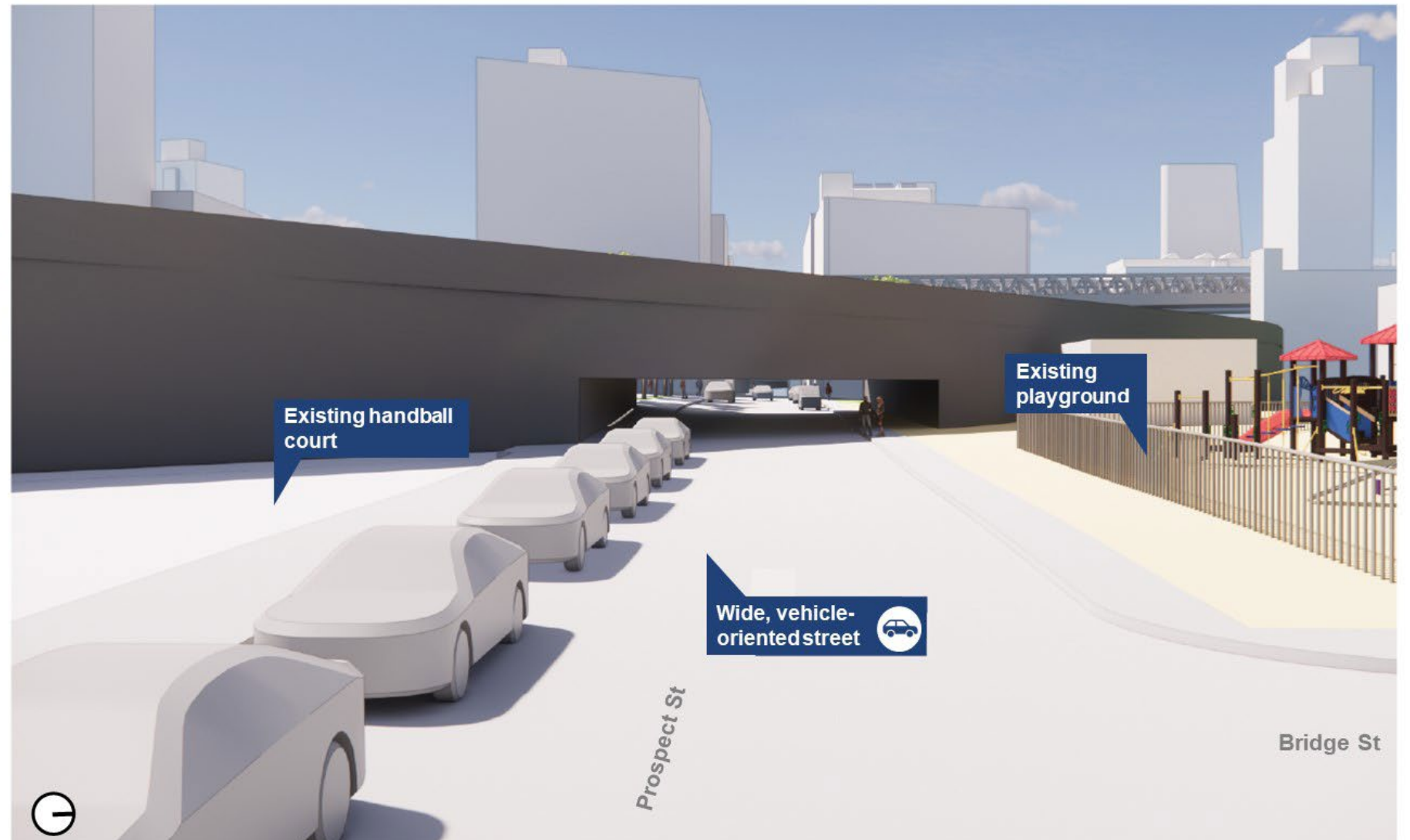
40



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Today, Prospect St is a car-oriented street running adjacent to the Farragut Houses, with a handball court on the left, and a playground on the right. Bridge St connects to this street and into York St to the north.

Prospect Street - Facing the BQE, Looking West Concept 2 - Existing



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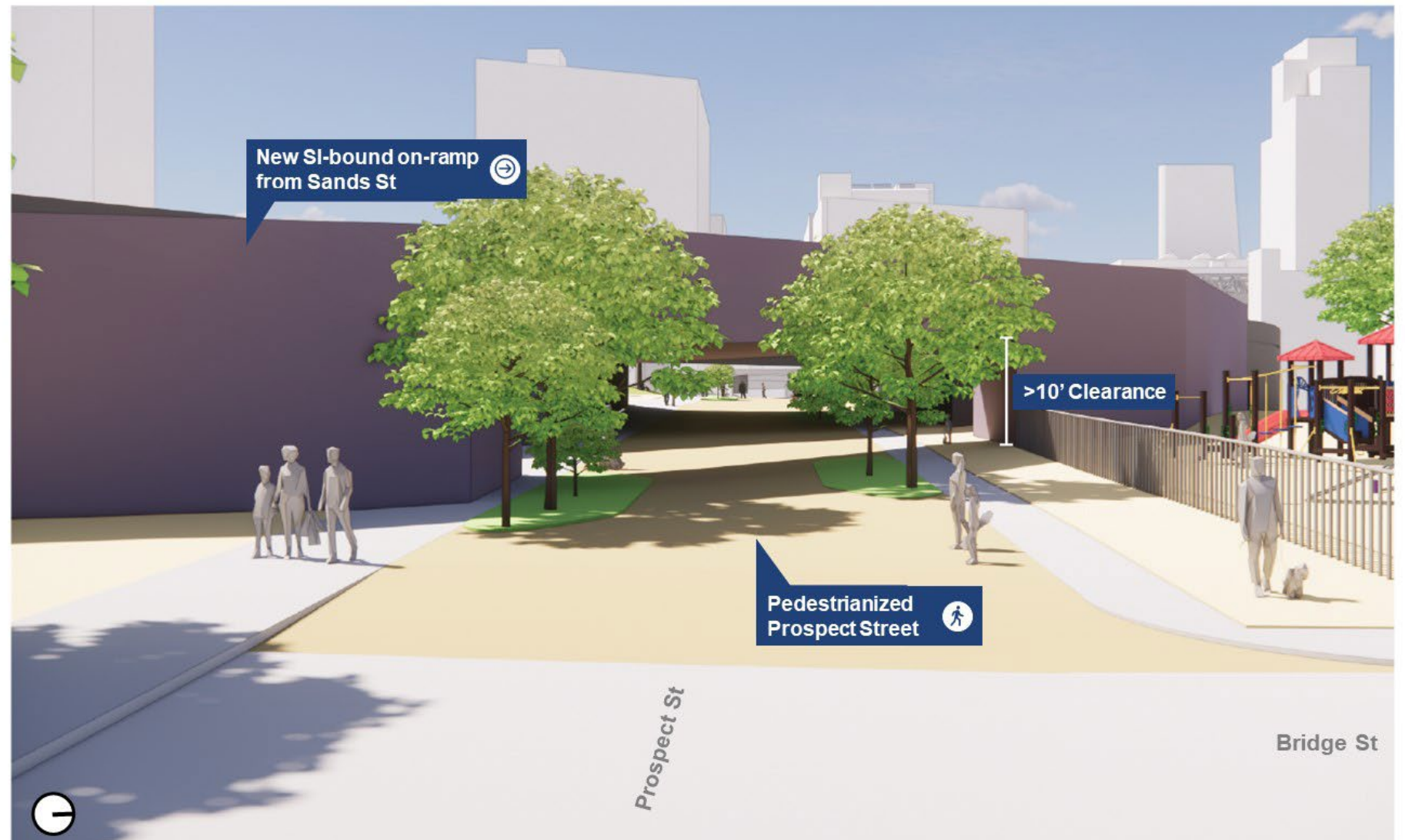
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

In Concept 2, the existing Staten Island-bound on-ramp is shifted to the north side of Sands St. Here you can see the new on-ramp alongside the existing BQE.

NYC DOT wants to point out that this ramp would rise over the pedestrian walkway currently used to access the F train at York Street, and next to the playground.

NYC DOT explored this concept in order to create significant new public space at Sands and Gold. It's not a perfect solution. This is one of the key tradeoffs to discuss during the workshops.

Prospect Street - Facing the BQE, Looking West Concept 2 - Proposed



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

We will look at how Concept 2 works at the corner of Gold and Sands.

Sands St & Gold St - Facing Southwest Concept 2 - Existing



On-ramp creates inaccessible and unusable open space 

Bus shelters and Bus stops located along Sands St 

No pedestrian access along south side of Sands Street due to highway-style on-ramps 



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This is a view of this corner with the on-ramp as it exists today.

Sands St & Gold St - Facing Southwest Concept 2 - Existing



Area at corner of Sands St and Gold St dedicated to BQE SIB traffic only. No community benefits

No connectivity on south Sands St sidewalk



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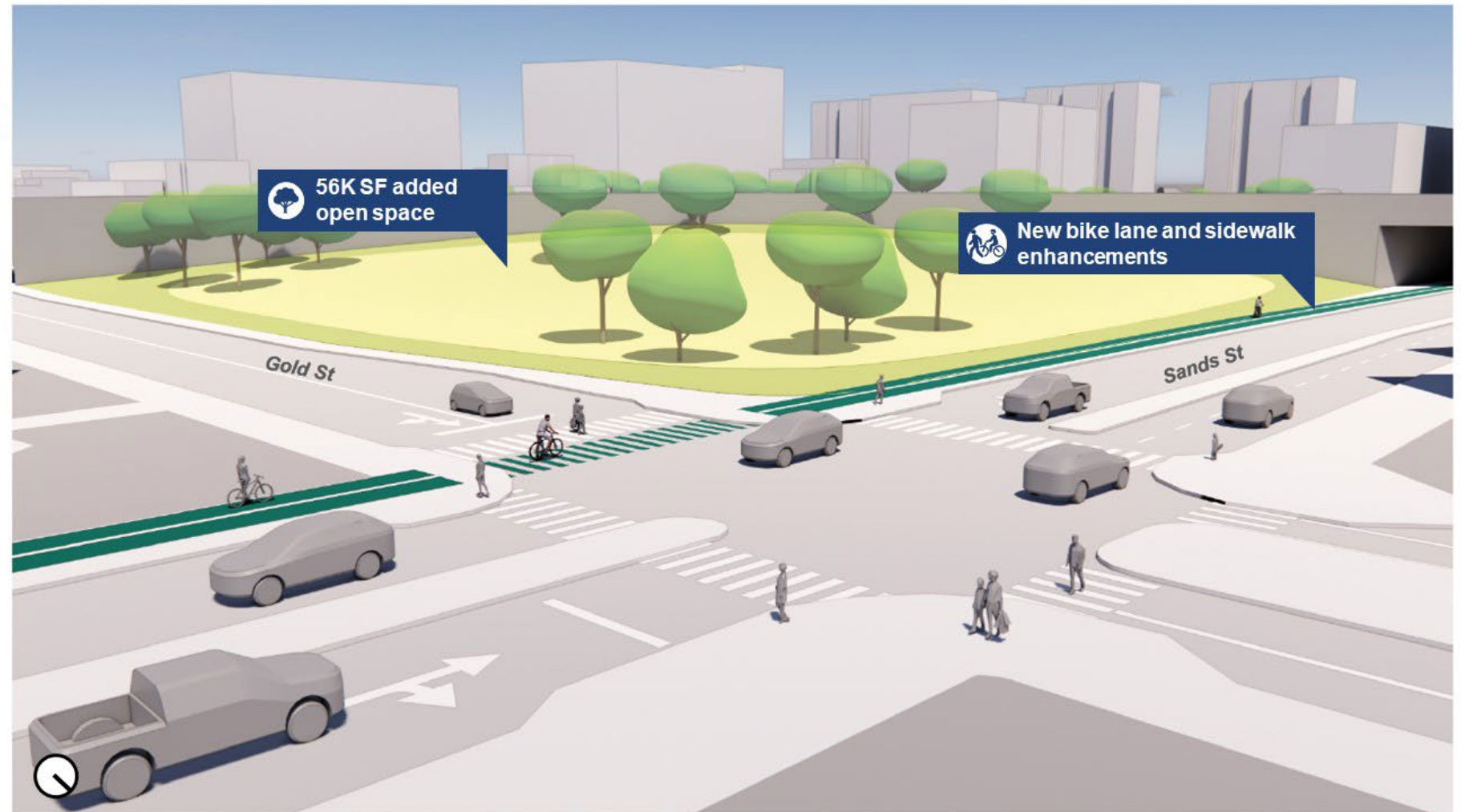


BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

By moving the on-ramp to the other side of Sands St, this entire corner could open to new uses.

NYC DOT is interested to hear from the community: if this concept was pursued, how would you want this space to be used?

Sands St & Gold St - Facing Southwest Concept 2 - Proposed



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Finally, Concept 3 introduces more significant changes that allow us to completely reimagine streets in the neighborhood by removing a substantial amount of traffic on local streets:

First, as mentioned earlier, this concept includes the construction of new elevated ramp structures that directly connect the Manhattan Bridge and BQE, highlighted in purple. Because traffic is so drastically reduced, Sands Street can be transformed into a much smaller-scale, pedestrian-friendly boulevard that helps stitch the neighborhood together. The intersection at Sands and Jay St can also be dramatically redesigned to improve connections for everyone.

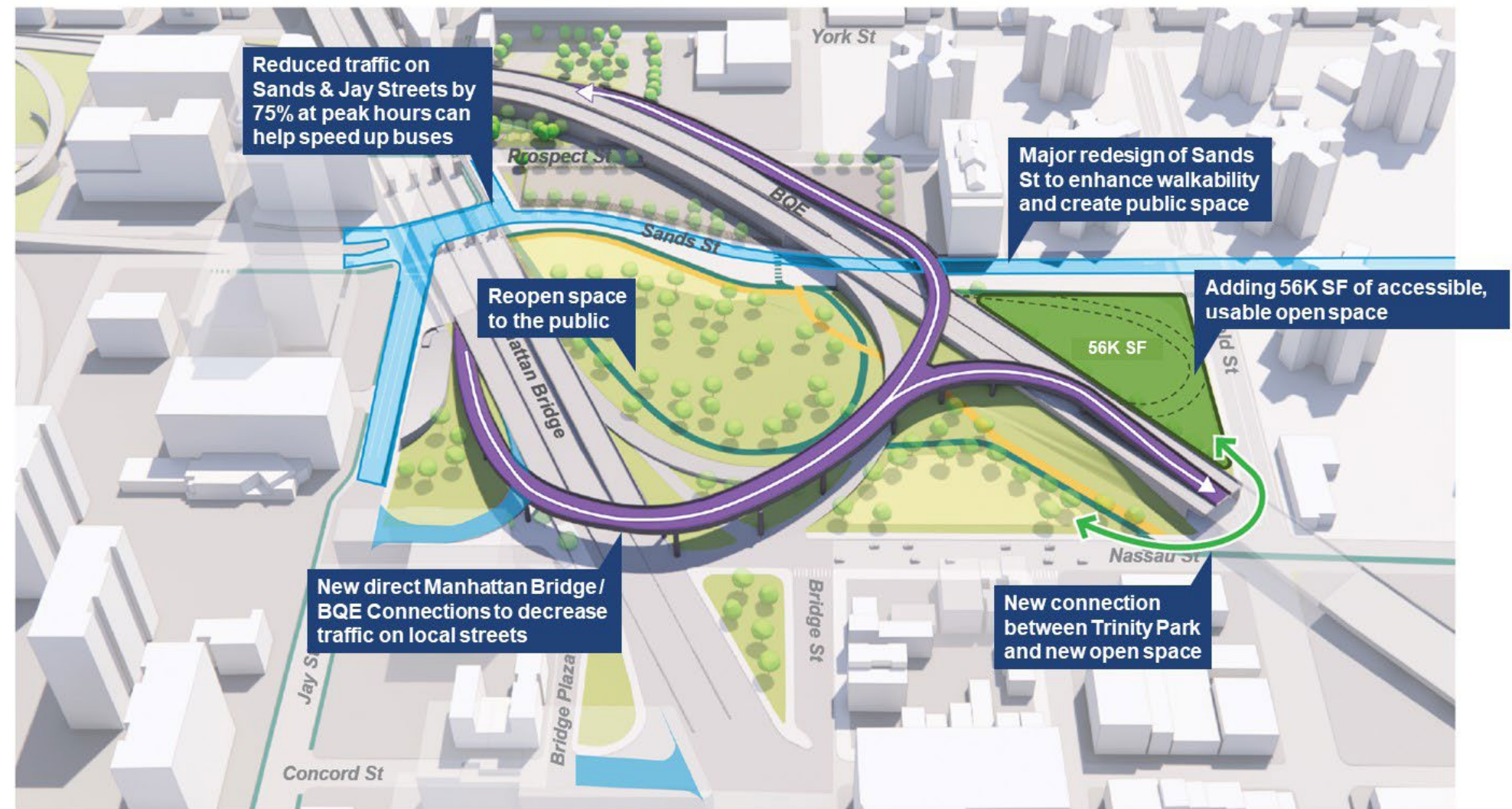
Second, similar to Concept 2, this concept makes open space on the corner of Sands & Gold Streets available for potential community benefit by moving the ramp.

The combination of these actions would most significantly reduce traffic in this area, helping to create potential bus service improvements.

It is important to note that this direct connection, despite all of the benefits, comes with some tradeoffs. The reconfiguration removes direct local access to the BQE, so drivers who need to access the Queens-bound BQE would need to instead enter Tillary Street and Staten Island-bound drivers would need to enter at Old Fulton Street or Flushing Avenue.

This concept would also have the most significant visual impact given the new elevated ramp structures.

Concept Comparison – Tools to Reach Our Goals Concept 3



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

We are again shifting to a view facing east on Sands St and looking at the area between the BQE and the Manhattan Bridge.

Sands Street & Jay St, Facing Farragut Houses (East) Concept 3 - Existing



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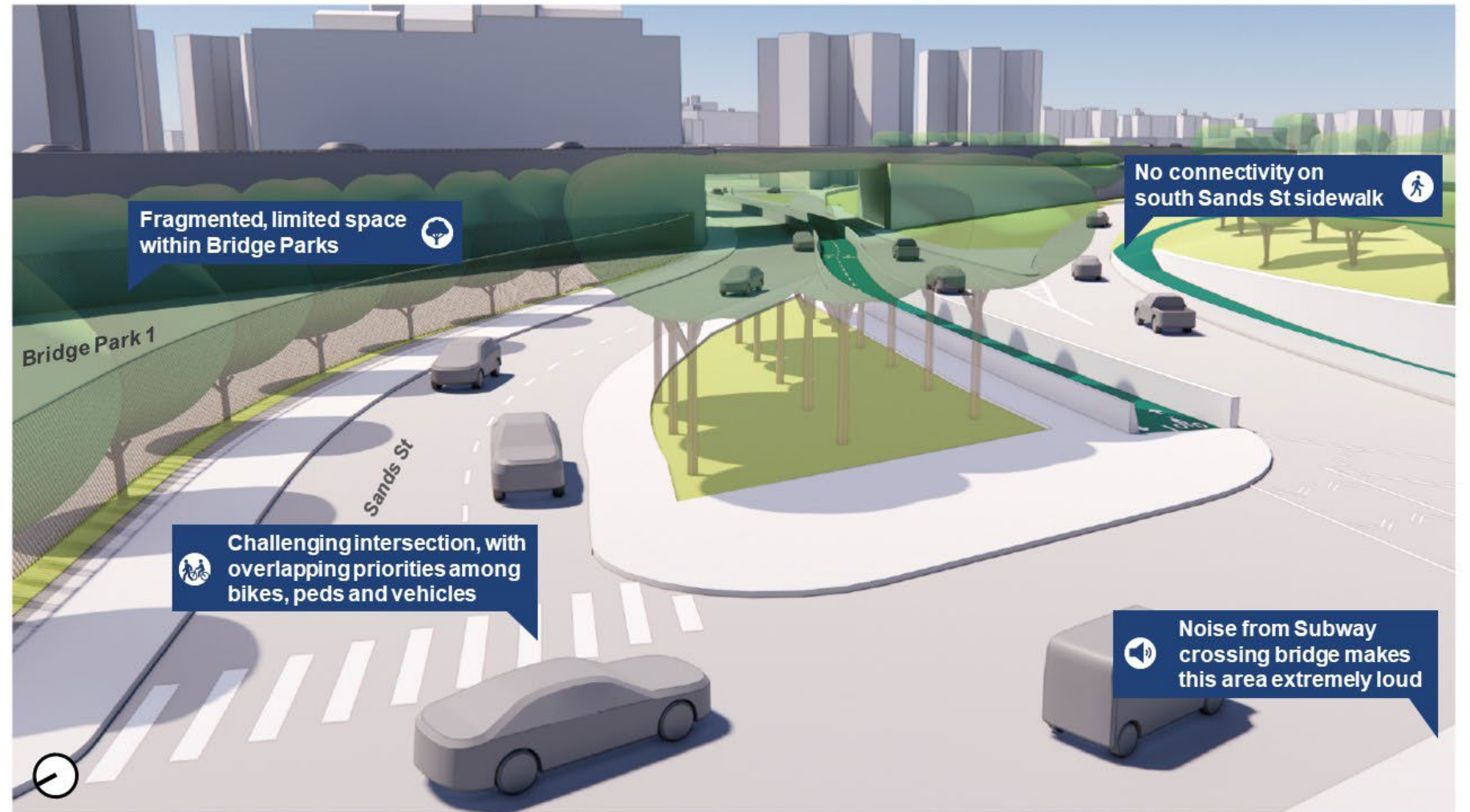


BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This is the area as it exists today, with challenging intersections and no connection on the south side of Sands Street.

Sands Street & Jay St, Facing Farragut Houses (East)

Existing



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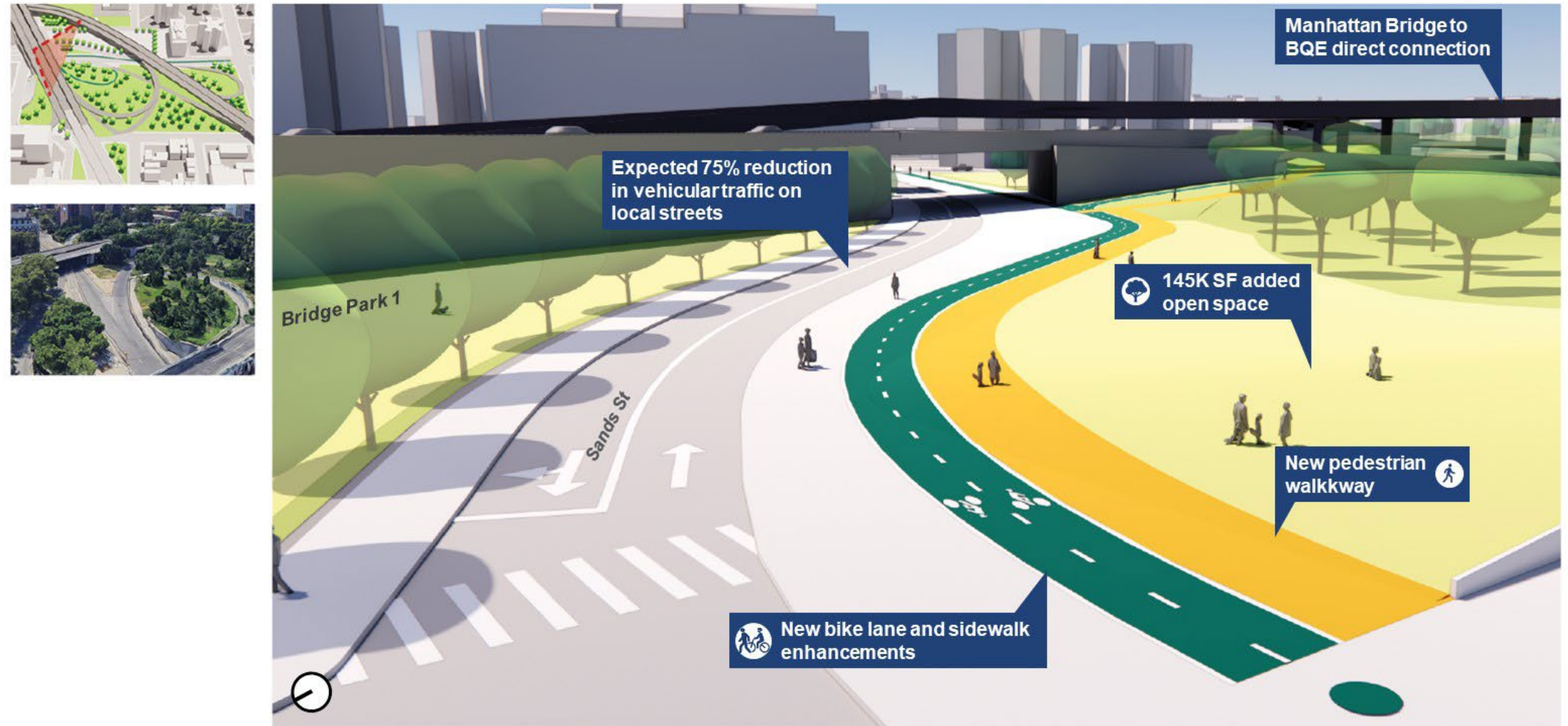
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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This rendering shows the drastic transformation of Sands Street in Concept 3 and the nearby intersections. Most notably, Sands St which is currently four lanes with a shared path at the center, could be transformed into a two-lane road with much less traffic. On the south side of Sands St, new bike and pedestrian connections are visible. At the top of the image is the direct connection from the Manhattan Bridge to the BQE.

Sands Street & Jay St, Facing Farragut Houses (East) Concept 3



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

NYC DOT is aware that the addition of a new highway structure would change the nature of the space around Trinity Park and its surroundings.

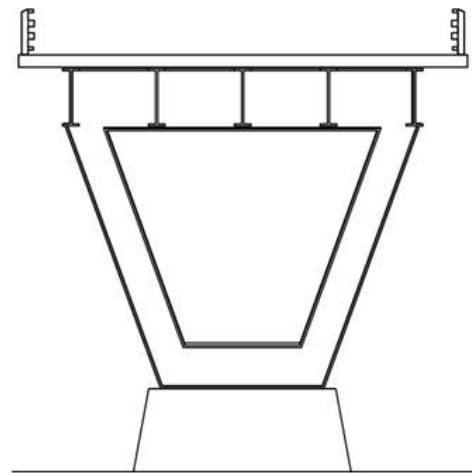
Understanding its potential visual impact, Concept 3 would best address many of the main public concerns that we've heard, including reducing traffic on neighborhood streets, providing better access to public space, and safer separation of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

NYC DOT asked the architectural team to take a look at how these elevated structures could be designed in a more appealing way.

For this area, two direct connection structural options are under consideration:

- The first approach - which we see here looking towards the Manhattan Bridge from Nassau St - is a steel girder system. Below the roadway, this could have a more open steel structure. The columns are also steel.

Bridge Approach A – Facing Manhattan Bridge from Flatbush Ave Concept 3 – Direct Connection



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

This is a view of the same structure, looking through Trinity Park on Nassau Street. Note that the new structure will likely be masked in some areas by the existing tree canopy.

Bridge Approach A – Looking West through Trinity Park Concept 3 – Direct Connection



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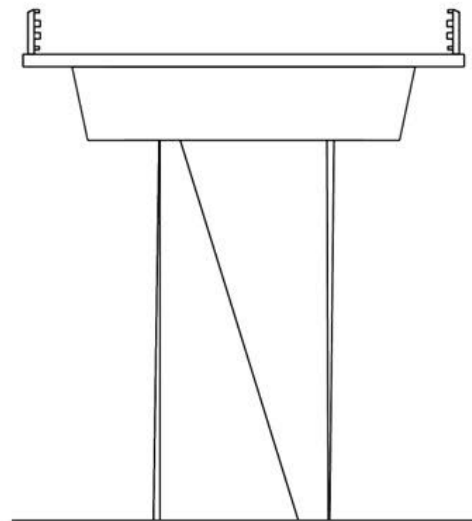
BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Again, looking towards Manhattan Bridge from Flatbush Ave, you can see that another approach is what's called a steel box girder system.

Unlike the first option, which had steel supports, this bridge would sit on concrete columns. Here they are designed and sculpted to minimize their bulkiness.

Below the roadway would be a continuous, more closed structure.

Bridge Approach A – Facing Manhattan Bridge from Flatbush Ave Concept 3 – Direct Connection



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Again, this is a view from Nassau St looking into Trinity Park for this design approach.

These visualizations are illustrative and there will be opportunities to refine these concepts further.

There are many engineering, technical and cost considerations to be further understood as these concepts evolve.

We look forward to hearing your feedback tonight.

Bridge Approach B - Looking West through Trinity Park Concept 3 – Direct Connection



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Working within the various physical constraints in this area, NYC DOT tried to look at every possibility to improve the streets, open spaces, and infrastructure for the community and others who travel through the area.

These 3 concepts provide a range of possibilities, from minimal changes to much more significant ones. In summary:

Concept 1 enhances traffic safety and connectivity along Sands and Jay Streets but does not reduce traffic on them. It adds minimal new public space, adding no major new infrastructure and creating no new visual impacts on the area.

Concept 2 achieves the same outcomes of Concept 1, but also opens up the large triangle of land at the corner of Sands and Gold Streets for community uses. However, this public space would come with the trade-off of adding a new, relocated BQE on-ramp that would impact the Bridge Street and McKinney Steward Parks, bring more traffic and noise to that location, and requires pedestrianizing Prospect Street, closing it to vehicles.

Finally, Concept 3 adds large new roadway structures to create a direct vehicle connection between the Manhattan Bridge and the BQE. This removes most of the traffic from Sands and Jay Streets in this area, which would provide much more substantial safety enhancements and a more comfortable environment for everyone: pedestrians, bus riders, cyclists, and drivers. Like Concept 2, it would create the potential for re-use of the triangle at Sands and Gold for public space. However, this concept would have the most significant visual impact due to the new highway infrastructure.

Three Roadway Configuration Concepts



Concept 1

GOAL

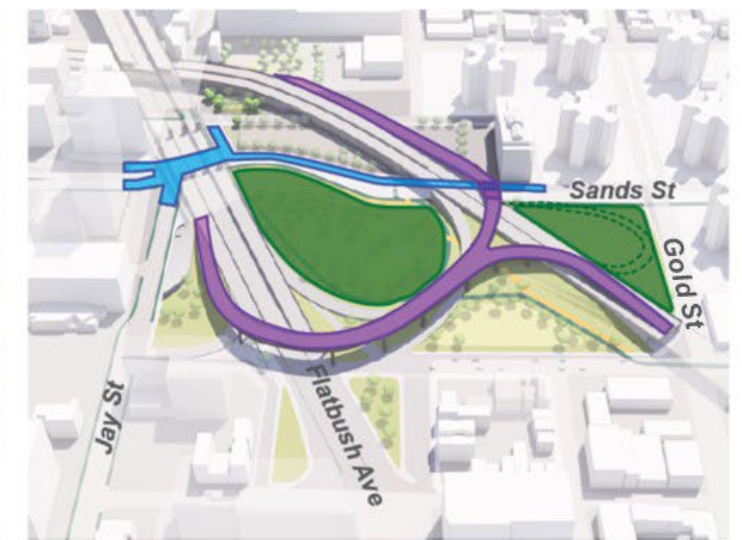
- Enhance walking & biking while avoiding new large infrastructure



Concept 2

GOAL

- Enhance local streets by enhancing safety for pedestrians and cyclists
- Create a large, new accessible open space adjacent to Farragut Houses



Concept 3

GOAL

- Substantially reduce local through-traffic with new large infrastructure, allowing for transformation of local streets for safety & comfort
 - Create a large new accessible open space adjacent to Farragut Houses



Street Level Safety Enhancements



New Direct Connections

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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Questions & Answers

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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Workshop Activity

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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Workshop Activities

1. Recap of the 3 Concepts & Go Into Some More Detail for Each
2. Revisit the 5 values: What is important to you? Is there something we did not consider? (use matrix at the tables to discuss the pros / cons of each)
3. Gather feedback on the concepts: what do you think about these concepts? Which of the concepts addresses today's challenges? What is do you think works well? What still needs review?



BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

How will NYC DOT come to a conclusion about the future of these spaces? There will be continuous opportunities for community feedback up to and through the federally-mandated environmental review process.

NYC DOT welcomes opportunities for additional meetings with various community groups and will keep the community updated every step of the way.

Next Steps



Apply for Federal Infrastructure Grant



Environmental Review



Ongoing Community Partners Events

NOTE: All meeting materials will be posted at nyc.gov/bqe following the public meetings.



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BQE Central Manhattan Bridge Interchange

Thank you!

