



Corridor Vision Safety, Equity and Resiliency

Eric Adams, Mayor | Ydanis Rodriguez, Commissioner

Community Partners Round 3 Update

April 2024



Background

NYC DOT is actively engaging communities along the BQE corridor in Brooklyn as part of the BQE Corridor Vision process. The BQE North and South engagement process will develop a vision for potential future improvements to communities surrounding the State-owned sections of the BQE corridor north of Sands Street to the Kosciuszko Bridge and south of Atlantic Avenue to the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge, including potential changes to adjacent streets. BQE North and South will evaluate potential short-term projects to address community concerns, as well as larger-scale, longer-term projects to reconnect communities that have been divided by the structure. Concurrently, the BQE Central engagement process will develop and implement a permanent solution for the City-owned structure from the Atlantic Avenue interchange to the Sands Street interchange. Federal funds, available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, provide an exciting opportunity to address long-standing concerns regarding the BQE for the 21st Century.

Community Partners Background

As part of the BQE Corridor Vision, NYC DOT has implemented a Community Partner program. Community Partners are community-based organizations that are leading additional grassroots engagement to gather community input, with emphasis on organizations serving underrepresented communities and those serving constituents whose primary language is not English.

Community Partners were announced in mid-December 2022 and began their first round of engagement in January 2023, which concluded in late March 2023. A summary of those Round 1 engagement efforts is available [here](#). Round 2 of Community Partners engagement began in April 2023 and concluded in August 2023. A summary of those Round 2 engagement efforts is available [here](#).

Round 3 of Community Partners engagement began in November 2023 and concluded in February 2024. High-level summaries of self-reported engagement processes and outcomes are included below. Responses have been condensed and edited for clarity, with **particular emphasis on highlighting feedback that differed from or was not as prominently heard in the NYC DOT-led engagement**. More in-depth feedback from the Community Partners has also been shared directly with the design team, to inform further refinement of the BQE Corridor Vision.

Arab American Association of New York (AAANY)



AAANY demonstrates its commitment to Brooklyn's Arab immigrant, refugee, and Muslim communities through their comprehensive service and advocacy programs. They provide a range of critical support services to over 7,000 participants annually, including women's empowerment and adult literacy programs, immigration legal assistance, mental health and domestic violence support services, civic engagement and community organizing, and youth programming.

Held engagements in Arabic and English, including 1 virtual workshop, 1 in-person workshop, 1 community walkthrough, ESL class visits, and flyering. AAANY's engagement was focused on Bay Ridge and South 4 concepts.

AAANY reported that participants:

Overall

- Viewed the Bay Ridge concepts favorably and particularly supported elements which incorporate greenery and landscaping, beautify public space, and add public amenities such as restrooms, WiFi, and charging stations.
- Continued to prioritize pedestrian safety through improving lighting and increasing the number of traffic cameras.
- Shared concern about parking loss for local residents due to the potential increase in activity these concepts may bring to the area.



**Community
Partner: Arab
American
Association of
New York**

Near-Term Interventions

- Liked the whole array of interventions, especially beautification, pedestrian improvements, restrooms, greenspace, and landscaping. Appreciated that planters could be also used for traffic calming.
- Some participants suggested a pedestrian-only street at the Bay Ridge Parkway crossing and expressed interest in extending the improvements along 7th Avenue.
- At the 86th Street crossing, participants highlighted the need to protect pedestrians from traffic exiting the BQE, and suggested mitigations such as improving traffic signals for pedestrians, restricting truck access to the exit, considering capping, and adding bus lanes.
- Participants encouraged further exploration of ways to expand access across the BQE to Sunset Park and Brooklyn Chinatown. Participants noted they often had to walk several blocks out of their way to find appropriate crossings.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Support for bus stop improvements, seating, WiFi/charging stations, and overhead shelter from rain.
- Participants noted the need for additional pedestrian space on 7th Avenue along the Bay Ridge trench, highlighting that pedestrians with grocery carts sometimes walked in the bike lane due to lack of sidewalk space.
- Raised concerns about illegal dumping on Erik Place and suggested that public realm improvements could discourage dumping.

Long-Term Interventions

- Support for the McKinley Park Overbuild and suggested amenities such as diaper changing and breastfeeding areas, Citi Bike stations, and water features.
- Suggested integrating noise mitigation treatments at Leif Ericson Park and at the Leif Ericson Park Cap, participants expressed interest in added parking and food concession spaces, as well as added lighting and speed cameras.
- Suggested pedestrian planning for the areas around the future Interborough Express (IBX) and multimodal connections.

Bay Ridge Community Development Center (BRCDC)



The mission of BRCDC is to promote and provide the highest quality activities and services that will contribute to the physical, emotional and social well-being of the community. BRCDC's vision is to enhance the quality of life and to fill the unmet needs through their services, programs and activities for their community regardless of ethnicity, gender or economic status.

Held engagements in English, including 1 workshop and 2 tabling events. BRCDC's engagement was focused on Bay Ridge and South 4 concepts.

BRCDC reported that participants:

Overall

- Shared some concern about bike lanes exacerbating congestion. Similarly, there was support to limit curb extensions to areas near schools and parks to avoid affecting congesting.
- Expressed concern about beautification and other concept treatments' potential to influence displacement or gentrification.

Near-Term Interventions

- Some participants liked the idea of adding raised planters and greenery at the 86th St crossing, while others expressed concern about losing on-street parking spaces.
- Shared safety concerns about bike lane improvements at the Bay Ridge Parkway crossing.
- Support the 7th Ave shared street concept and increased greenery along the corridor.



Community Partner: Bay Ridge Community Development Center

- Interest from youth participants in soccer facilities as a public space use. Other participants expressed interest in additional restrooms and seating areas.

Long-Term Interventions

- Expressed support for the McKinley Park Overbuild concept and are interested to learn more about screened ventilation and air quality and noise mitigations.
- Liked the pop-up market concept in Lief Ericson park and expressed interest in prioritizing vendors from the community.
- Generally support community developments on embankments. However, some participants expressed concern about noise and air quality from the highway as well as the pollution, and a desire to see mitigations considered in future designs.

Brooklyn Chinese-American Association (BCA)



Founded in 1988, BCA is a community-based not-for-profit human services agency that has over 34 years of successful experience and expertise in providing Asian immigrants with multi-dialectical and culturally sensitive access services, case management and family services. BCA aims to address the needs and concerns of Asian-Americans, as well as act as liaison between the

Asian-American community, the government and various private and service organizations in order to promote a congenial relationship among them.

Held engagements in Cantonese, Mandarin, and English, including 6 neighborhood focus-group sessions, as well as multilingual flyerling to advertise virtual engagement options through WeChat. BCA's engagement was focused on Sunset Park and South 3 concepts.

BCA reported that participants:

Overall

- Expressed that safety remained a top priority for any planned projects and implementation, including interest in lower speed limits for vehicles in areas with lots of pedestrians and bikes.
- Noted the potential to improve access to the waterfront by enhancing connections across the BQE to connect neighborhoods in Sunset Park to the waterfront. Participants suggested a weekend shuttle bus to make this connection.

- Desired local “adopt-a-block” program which could provide funding to local businesses to support public realm maintenance and beautification.
- Expressed concern that demand for electric vehicle (EV) chargers might be low in Sunset Park.
- Emphasized that sanitation will be an important element to attract residents to use amenities under the BQE.
- Encouraged support for homeless New Yorkers for successful activations under the BQE.

Near-Term Interventions

- Emphasized the desire for improvements along Third Ave including improved lighting under the BQE, traffic calming measures such as speed cameras, and enhanced pedestrian crossings at intersections under the BQE.
- Expressed interest in greenery and plantings along sidewalks.
- Supported enhanced connections between 4th Avenue R train stations and the waterfront.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Supported pop-up markets on Third Avenue in Sunset Park; suggested shuttle buses or new bike lanes to improve access to the activations.
- Welcomed the addition of a dog park as a possible public realm use under the BQE in Sunset Park.
- Were interested in operational uses under the BQE such as microhub facilities and introducing metered parking under the BQE north of 36th Street.



**Community
Partner: Brooklyn
Chinese-
American
Association**

CPC is an over 57-year-old Social Services organization serving over 200,000 New Yorkers across all 51 Council districts. Their mission is to promote the social and economic empowerment of Chinese American, immigrant, and low-income communities through 50 plus programs including Childcare Services, Youth Services, Language Access, Immigration Services, Benefits Supports, Services for communities with different needs, and Older Adult Services.

Held engagements in Mandarin, and English, including 2 listening sessions. CPC's engagement was focused on Sunset Park and South 3 concepts.

CPC reported that participants:

Overall

- Underscored that proper maintenance and aesthetic improvements like murals and green spaces are key to making the area safer and more welcoming.
- Were interested in traffic congestion and safety mitigations.

Near-Term Interventions

- Desire for pedestrian safety measures, such as speed and red light cameras, increased time for pedestrian crossing signals, and curb extensions to shorten crosswalks.
- Supported aesthetic improvements under the highway and suggested the space could be activated with spaces to socialize. Interest in wayfinding signage to support community member access to infrastructure and amenities like bus stops, markets, parking, and e-bike charging.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Supported managed parking and market space as amenities under the highway, paired with painting, overhead protection, and lighting to improve the space for pedestrians and visitors.
- Supported expanded sidewalks and new rain gardens.
- Mixed support for e-bike charging stations. Some participants felt e-bike charging stations could mitigate indoor charging safety concerns, while other participants called for more regulation for e-bikes before expanding e-bike amenities.

El Puente is a community human rights institution that promotes leadership for peace and justice through the engagement of members (youth and adult) in the arts, education, scientific research, wellness and environmental action. Founded in 1982, El Puente currently integrates the diverse activities and community campaigns of El Puente Arts, the El Puente Green Light District (a holistic community sustainability initiative) and the Global Justice Training Institute within its six Youth Leadership Centers, its public high school the El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice, and El Puente-MS 50 Community School in North Brooklyn, and its Latino Climate Action Network in Puerto Rico. El Puente remains at the forefront of community-led movements for self-determination and as such, initiates/impacts social policy locally and nationally.

Held multiple engagements in English and Spanish, including 3 community conversations focused on stewardship of local land, 1 environmental justice walk, and 1 environmental justice workshop, as well pop-up engagement. El Puente's engagement was focused on Williamsburg and North 2 concepts.

El Puente reported that participants:

Near-Term Interventions

- Youth members responded positively to seeing more greenery and planters, especially planters that act as a barrier between pedestrians and vehicles.
- Highlighted the importance of near-term solutions to enhance safety, and noted that trucks and cars often don't adhere to speed limits in areas with lots of pedestrians.



**Community
Partner:
El Puente**

Medium-Term Interventions

- Responded well to concepts that would connect open spaces in the neighborhood and recognized the beneficial health and safety impacts of street closures. However, participants noted that some folks do still use cars in the neighborhood.
- Expressed continued interest in the rerouting of truck routes and investments in public transportation.
- Expressed concern about the safety of both pedestrians and cyclists.

Long-Term Interventions

- Responded positively to the idea of reclaiming land through capping over the BQE, as it's a familiar project to many through BQGreen.
- Desired more greenery and were fond of the idea of community groups maintaining public spaces, and having more community centers and resources.

Evergreen Exchange



Evergreen is a membership organization that champions manufacturing, creative production, and industrial service businesses in North Brooklyn and beyond. They connect businesses with resources and opportunities to help create and maintain high quality jobs at all skill levels.

Held engagements in English focused on local industrial business engagement, including 2 focus groups, multiple email blasts, surveys, individual meetings, and targeted follow-ups. Evergreen's engagement was focused on Greenpoint and Meeker Avenue and North 1 concepts, as well as Williamsburg and North 2 concepts.



Community Partner: Evergreen

Evergreen reported that participants:

Overall

- Underscored the importance of looking at impacts to emergency services, traffic, and the economic viability of business and residential needs holistically.
- Highlighted the importance of preserving parking within the North 1 region given limited public transit, proximity to the Industrial Business Zone (IBZ), and workers commuting to the IBZ.
- Shared concerns that a reduction in parking would limit access for visitors to local businesses and commuters.
- Highlighted the need to consider and plan projects collectively and shared concern that there have been many separate projects planned and implemented in the area.

Near-Term/Medium-Term Interventions

- Participants expressed a desire for concepts to balance the needs of diverse stakeholders in the area. Participants used the Meeker Under as an example suggesting that the proposal could be modified to preserve some parking while incorporating pedestrian enhancement like lighting and intersection safety improvements.
- Participants recommended addressing environmental resiliency by adding green infrastructure such as rock swales and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations,
- Participants recommended implementing aesthetic improvements along with ongoing maintenance.

Fifth Avenue Committee (FAC)



FAC is a nationally recognized comprehensive community development corporation based in South Brooklyn. Their mission is to advance economic, social, and racial justice in New York City through integrated, community-centered affordable housing, grassroots organizing, policy advocacy, and transformative education, training, and services that build the power to shape their community's future. To achieve their mission, they develop and manage affordable housing and community facilities, create economic opportunities, and ensure access to economic stability, organize tenants and residents around housing justice and accountable development issues and campaigns, and provide student centered adult education.

Held engagements in English and Spanish, including 3 in-person engagement sessions, 2 pop-ups, and surveying efforts. FAC's engagement was focused on Gowanus and South 2 concepts, as well as Sunset Park and South 3 concepts.

FAC reported that participants:

Overall

- Expressed that addressing noise and air pollution was top priority and the concepts should better address those concerns. Many participants shared a feeling that public realm activations near or under the structure would not be successful without noise and air pollution mitigations.
- Were generally supportive or felt neutral on the existing concept proposals, but many felt they did not go far enough to mitigate the effects of the BQE on the surrounding communities.
- Interest in more information on overhead protection and clarity on what it would look like, to address concerns about debris falling from the BQE structure.
- Desired greater specificity in concept proposals, with additional explanations about various features and programming.

Near-Term Interventions

- Were interested in additional bike infrastructure, including bike lanes on Third Avenue, and advocated for concentrating bike parking under the viaduct.
- Continued to prioritize pedestrian and other safety improvements, and supported improved crossings, expanded sidewalks and pedestrian-protecting planters.



**Community
Partner:
Fifth Avenue
Committee**

- Expressed mixed sentiments about parking. Some expressed support for managed parking and some supported removing parking entirely.
- Highlighted the need for improved lighting under the elevated structure.
- Emphasized the importance of basic maintenance of these spaces and quality of life investments, including more greenery.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Expressed supervision and maintenance concerns about the Locker NYC program's viability under the BQE; shared interest but skepticism about the feasibility of microhubs.

Long-Term Interventions

- Shared a desire to completely remove, cap, bury, or tear-down the BQE.

Mixteca

MIXTECA

Mixteca's mission is to empower the Mexican and Latin-American immigrants of the New York area by providing them access to services that enhance their quality of life and will allow them to reach sustainable social and economic development. They offer a variety of programs and services that respond to the specific needs of immigrant families and aim to build a supportive environment for the growing Mexican and Latin-American immigrant community.

Held engagements in English and Spanish including workshops, and weekly community support sessions and discussions. Mixteca's engagement was focused on Sunset Park and South 3 concepts.

Mixteca reported that participants:

Overall

- Expressed support for open and green spaces to provide opportunities for relaxation, recreation, bonding, and contribution to the overall well-being and cohesion of the community.

Near-Term Interventions

- Highlighted strong appreciation for lighting improvements included in Third Ave concepts as it addresses critical safety and visibility needs in the area.

- Recognized the potential of adding art pieces such as murals under the BQE in Sunset Park to brighten the space.
- Expressed concerns about the prevalence of graffiti, which contributes to a sense of neglect and detracts from the vibrancy of the neighborhood.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Highlighted the pressing need for immediate enhancements to the bus infrastructure to increase efficiency and reliability.
- Community members desired pedestrian improvements to the median along Third Ave.
- Numerous participants expressed concerns regarding the potential implementation of a play area under the BQE and stressed that public space activations should prioritize safety for pedestrians spending time in and crossing Third Ave.

Long-Term Inventions

- Emphasized the need for the implementation of strong safety measures to the Red Hook Bridge improvements, especially taking into account that children will be using the bridge.



Community Partner: Mixteca

North Brooklyn Parks Alliance



The North Brooklyn Parks Alliance was formed in 2003 as NYC's only district-wide parks conservancy, working with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, NYC DOT, NYS DOT, elected officials, and the community to maintain, activate, enhance, and expand local parks, while challenging common perceptions of what defines open space. Their mission is to create an equitable, accessible, and vibrant parks and open space system in North Brooklyn.

Held engagements in English, including 1 in-person workshop, 1 virtual workshop, 1 virtual office hours, and additional feedback received over email. North Brooklyn Parks Alliance's engagement was focused on Greenpoint and Meeker Avenue and North 1 concepts.

North Brooklyn Parks Alliance reported that participants:

Overall

- Expressed a strong interest in the overall BQE planning effort, noting that walking and biking around and under the highway is more stressful than in other areas of north Brooklyn.
- Noted that operating improvements like sanitation, lighting, and stormwater management, are foundational to maintain a quality standard of public space. Suggested to pair these investments with street safety and accessibility improvements.
- Participants expressed concern about the spillover effects of the BQE on adjacent neighborhoods such as air and noise pollution, cut-through traffic, truck traffic, and vehicles circulating to find parking.
- Participants expressed concerns about the feasibility of executing current plans due to public space maintenance and sustainable funding streams.
- Desire to see safety improvements between Borinquen Place and Metropolitan Avenue, including improvements to the BQE on- and off-ramps.
- Prioritized street safety which could be addressed through a road diet on Meeker Avenue.
- Expressed the desire for more green infrastructure, including trees, planted areas and rain gardens.

Near-Term Interventions

- Expressed that North 1 activations were received positively. Participants noted the need for significant street safety investment, maintenance, and other planning in order for activations to be successful.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Participants expressed that the proposals on streets under and adjacent to the BQE should prioritize pedestrian crossings improvements.

Long-Term Interventions

- Shared concern that North 1 proposals were near and medium term and that long term proposals were necessary for a comprehensive vision.

Red Hook Initiative (RHI)



RHI is a community-based nonprofit in Red Hook. They believe that social change to overcome systemic inequities begins with empowered youth. In partnership with community adults, they nurture young people to be inspired, resilient, and healthy, and to envision themselves as co-creators of their lives, community and society. Since 2002, RHI has worked alongside residents of Red Hook to carry out resident-led solutions to local problems and to confront the impacts of racial inequity and decades of disinvestment on their historically under-resourced community. Their approach serves 6,500 BIPOC residents each year through an interconnected model of youth development, advocacy, and organizing on local issues, and community hiring.

Held engagements in English, including issuing an online survey and holding 1 in-person one-on-one survey session. RHI's engagement was focused on Gowanus and South 2 concepts.

Near-Term Interventions

- Desired more concepts for safety improvements along BQE in Red Hook, especially along the Hamilton Ave corridor.
- Highlighted that installation of crosswalks and additional time to cross the street were top priorities for adjusted safety measures in the area.
- Expressed interest in improvements for drivers such as improving road signs and markings.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Participants responded positively to concepts featuring tree installation and safety improvements.
- Expressed interest in more greenspace under the BQE; some expressed concern about the feasibility of creating safe places for people to congregate under the BQE.
- Shared concerns about safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in response to the Gowanus Malls concept.
- Welcomed additional and enhanced bike lanes.

Long-Term Interventions

- Noted that safety improvements were a top priority and viewed possible safety improvements in the Red Hook Bridge Connector concept as positive.

Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation (SBIDC)



SBIDC provides advocacy and services to help businesses in the Sunset Park, Red Hook and Gowanus neighborhoods grow and create employment opportunities for local residents. Since the organization's inception in 1978, SBIDC has been a driving force in the improvement of the Southwest Brooklyn economy by delivering a wide range of free business services to local firms and acting as an advocate for local small businesses, and the overall preservation of the industrial economy. They provide business education courses, technical assistance to entrepreneurs and small business owners, and workforce training and placement services for job seekers throughout Brooklyn.

Held engagements in English, including worker-focused street surveying, 2 office hour sessions, business networking video call sessions, 4 one-on-one discussions, and newsletter updates. SBIDC's engagement was focused on Gowanus and South 2 concepts, as well as Sunset Park and South 3 concepts.

SBIDC reported that participants:

Overall

- Expressed enthusiasm about added lighting under the BQE to enhance pedestrian crossings.
- Businesses valued having parking under the BQE. They supported metered parking in South 3 and preferred free parking in South 2 due to the greater distance from the subway.
- Expressed concern about the BQE corridor being used for activities due to the current safety conditions.
- Viewed noise mitigations as critical, especially for the success of public realm activations.
- Shared concerns about sanitation along the corridor, including pigeon poop under the highway structure.
- Requested appropriate construction material and equipment storage for long-term construction projects to improve the public realm and pedestrian crossings.

Near-Term Interventions

- Expressed broad consensus about the need for safer pedestrian crossings along Third Avenue, balanced with a design which provides enough space for trucks to turn onto cross streets to service industrial areas.
- Suggested pedestrian crossing enhancements at Clinton Street and Hamilton Avenue intersection.
- Some participants wanted specific blocks designated as enhanced pedestrian crossings and wayfinding, especially near subway stations.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Had mixed reviews for the market space under the BQE included in the Gowanus Malls and Third Avenue concepts. Many participants felt the area was too loud and dirty to be a place for people to congregate. One participant suggested glass indoor structures to make the market more viable.
- Had difficulty envisioning a way to include active recreation under the BQE given the exhaust fumes in the area, and preferred emphasis on improved crossings.

Long-Term Interventions

- Shared substantial interest in the Red Hook Bridge Connector. Participants requested this work proceed sooner. One participant suggested investment in a new pedestrian bridge rather than reconstruction of the current bridge.
- One participant requested new street and pedestrian crossings over the BQE trench in Cobble Hill and the Columbia Street Waterfront District.

St. Nicks Alliance



St. Nicks Alliance seeks to transform the lives of low- and moderate-income people through employment, education, housing, and health care. They do this by delivering impactful services with measurable outcomes to children, adults, and the elderly. As a civic anchor they carry out this mission within the context of building a sustainable community for all people through the arts, environmental advocacy, and urban planning.

Held engagements in English and Spanish, including a community meeting and tabling at community events. St. Nick's engagement was focused on Greenpoint and Williamsburg, including North 1, North 2, and North 3 concepts.

St. Nicks Alliance reported that participants:

Near-Term Interventions

- Supported exercise space under the BQE and highlighted that air quality should be improved before public space amenities are implemented.
- Viewed the improvements of lighting and curb extensions as positive.
- Emphasized that vendors selected for markets, events, and performances should appeal to the entire community.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Supported pedestrian and transit improvements, such as bus stop improvements and pedestrian streets, and other public realm amenities including community play areas and gardens.
- Expressed concern with uses under the BQE such as skateboard parks, permanent seating, and phone charge stations due to concerns with maintenance and operations.

Long-Term Interventions

- Supported a full cap over the BQE trench.

Transportation Alternatives (TA)



TA reclaims New York City from cars, transforming streets into safe, sustainable, and equitable places to walk, bike, take transit, gather, and thrive. For nearly 50 years, TA has led the movement for safe, equitable streets in New York City. They believe that streets belong to the people of New York City, and they work with New Yorkers in every borough to build a future that rises to the needs of their communities.

Held engagements in English and Spanish, including 1 in-person workshop which included a video discussing the process so far and breakout focus groups for BQE sections. TA's engagement was focused on Cobble Hill and South 1 concepts, Gowanus and South 2 concepts, Sunset Park and South 3 concepts, and Bay Ridge and South 4 concepts.

TA reported that participants:

Overall

- Prioritized improved street safety, community connections, access to public transportation, freight planning, and congestion mitigations.
- Expressed desire to consider neighborhood context and needs on each side of the highway.
- Expressed interest in translated materials for Community Partner engagement to better serve non-English speakers.
- Shared concerns that activating spaces under the highway with recreational uses may contribute to gentrification.
- Interest in visual depictions of noise mitigations and view this investment as critical towards making the entire BQE corridor a more comfortable public realm.

Near-Term Interventions

- Supportive of all safety and operational upgrades including seating, murals, and bike share expansions.
- Requested improved lighting under the highway throughout South 2 and South 3.
- Shared concern that planters or murals within South 1 could impede visibility if they are improperly placed.
- Desire for more information on maintenance planning for all investments.
- Participants suggested improved crossings along Hicks Street, Henry Street, and at Atlantic Avenue to better access the waterfront; highlighted curb extensions as a favored tool.
- Highlighted the importance of ADA accessibility for all improvements.
- Supported expanding bike share options into Bay Ridge.
- Desire to see removal of illegally parked trucks along 7th Avenue in Bay Ridge to improve safety and the public realm.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Supported all safety and operational upgrades including permanent seating, microhubs, electric vehicle (EV) charging with limited car parking, rain gardens, and WiFi/phone charging.
- In South 3, residents expressed support for a protected bike lane along Third Avenue to increase cycling on the corridor. Participants suggested that parking lanes could be used as a buffer to vehicle lanes.
- One participant who regularly drives suggested street improvements such as street medians, speed bumps, and longer pedestrian crossing signals to support pedestrian safety and street crossings.
- Suggested a balance in accommodating vehicles and pedestrians, to support the local economy as well as residential needs. For example, the needs of auto shops should be considered because they are part of the small business network.
- Supported rain gardens and called for comprehensive stormwater drainage improvements along the corridor.

Long-Term Interventions

- Support for proposals that included capping the BQE, partially in the South 4 section. Requested consideration of new pedestrian bridges to increase connectivity across the BQE in Bay Ridge.
- Wanted to better understand effects of capping, such as possible air pollution near ventilation sites and emergency vehicle access to the BQE, and how to mitigate any negative effects.

United Jewish Organizations of Williamsburg and North Brooklyn (UJO)



UJO was established in 1966 to meet the social service and advocacy needs of the community. Since then, the UJO is the main social service provider in the area offering services to the poor and needy including enrollment in SNAP, Medicaid and health insurance, senior services, housing, food distributions and many other supports. The UJO also advocates for the community with the government on community planning needs and many other local issues affecting area residents.



**Community
Partner:
United Jewish
Organizations of
Williamsburg and
North Brooklyn**

Held engagements primarily in Yiddish and English, including a community dinner and a school-based presentation and survey at Beth Rachel School for Girls. UJO's engagement focused on the Williamsburg region and North 2 concepts, and the Navy Yard, Park Avenue and North 3 concepts.

UJO reports that participants:

Overall

- Adult participants identified pedestrian safety and addressing congestion along the corridor as a key priority. Youth participants noted the areas around BQE on and off ramps are in need of pedestrian and congestion improvements.
- Raised concerns that congestion pricing could worsen traffic in the area, underscoring the importance of addressing congestion.
- Highlighted that when parking is removed at corners for daylighting, it is often replaced with outdoor dining or planters, which sometimes decrease visibility.
- Youth participants raised sanitation issues, particularly rats.
- Shared a desire to see emphasis on improving the safety of the Kent Avenue bike lane. Some participants felt the Bedford and Wythe-Franklin bike lanes were underutilized and suggested their removal.

Near-Term Interventions

- Desire for more traffic enforcement agents at congested streets to assist with safety and traffic management.
- Support for off-hour delivery initiatives.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Identified managed parking and parking infrastructure as high priorities.
- Advocated to address congestion and safety concerns at the BQE Wythe Avenue Exit (Exit 31).
- Participants raised the idea of removing select plazas to better connect existing streets in Williamsburg.
- Participants felt that vehicle travel lanes should not be narrowed for new bike lanes or greenery due to concerns that narrowed streets would increase congestion.

Long-Term Interventions

- Strong support for capping the BQE, especially between Marcy and Wythe, for community-oriented development, greenery, and parking.

Women's Empowerment Coalition of NYC



WECNYC
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
COALITION OF NYC
EDUCATE . EMPOWER . ELEVATE

The Women's Empowerment Coalition of NYC (WECNYC) builds power among women from diverse communities through dialogue, education, leadership development and social services.

Held engagements in English and Arabic, including 2 general workshops and 1 youth-focused workshop. WECNYC's engagement focused on the Sunset Park region and South 3 concepts, as well as the Bay Ridge region and South 4 concepts.

WECNYC reported that:

Near-Term Interventions

- Supported markets and shopping-oriented activations, bike lanes, seating, murals, lighting, WiFi and charging stations, seasonal programming, and community activities. These activations were prioritized over exercise equipment and rain gardens.
- Expressed excitement about the possibility for quick implementation of near term initiatives. Participants were eager to see Third Avenue improvements as quickly as possible, particularly those that enhance safety, cleanliness, and quality of life.

Medium-Term and Long-Term Interventions

- Expressed particular interest in murals and public art, overhead protections under the BQE, expanded sidewalks, and new bike lanes.
- Suggested that murals installed under and around the BQE may help prevent graffiti.

Yemeni American Merchants Association (YAMA)



YAMA was founded in 2017 as the very first and only Arabic-speaking merchants association in New York City. Over the years they have evolved to serve both Arabic-speaking small business owners and their families by offering a range of social services, educational programs, and advocacy campaigns. Their mission is to educate and elevate Yemeni American merchants and their families through education, civil rights advocacy, business, and social service support.

Held 1:1 engagements in English and Arabic with business owners in Sunset Park, including 2 virtual workshops, 1 in-person workshop, and 43 one-on-one business interviews. YAMA's engagement focused on the Sunset Park region and South 3 concepts, as well as Bay Ridge and South 4 concepts.

YAMA reported that participants:

Overall

- Participants continued to express concern for lighting and pedestrian safety, particularly under the elevated BQE structure in Sunset Park.
- Generally welcomed the South 3 and South 4 concepts. Some participants expressed concern that public realm investments may contribute to gentrification, or take away customers from existing local businesses.
- Support for a bike lane between Third Avenue and the NYC Ferry landing at the Brooklyn Army Terminal.
- Expressed safety concerns and general concerns about the congestion created by viaduct improvements and how this might affect the flow of traffic especially for public transportation.



Near-Term Interventions

- Highlighted that street improvements should be accessible for people with disabilities.
- Support for improved and increased lighting along Third Ave, with a desire to see all along the corridor rather than just one portion.

Medium-Term Interventions

- Some participants did not want a reduction in parking with the implementation of pedestrian improvements.

Long-Term Interventions

- Shared concerns about the safety of proposed community development spaces on BQE embankments in South 4.

Additional information on Community Partners can be viewed at <https://bqevision.com/community-partner>.

What's Next

The final BQE Corridor Vision report is expected to be released in Spring 2024, and will share additional information on concepts and overall next steps.

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

Note: This document reflects the feedback from the Community Partners in summary format and is not a full transcription of feedback received. Responses have been condensed and edited for clarity, with particular emphasis on highlighting feedback that differed from or was not as prominently heard in the NYC DOT-led engagement.