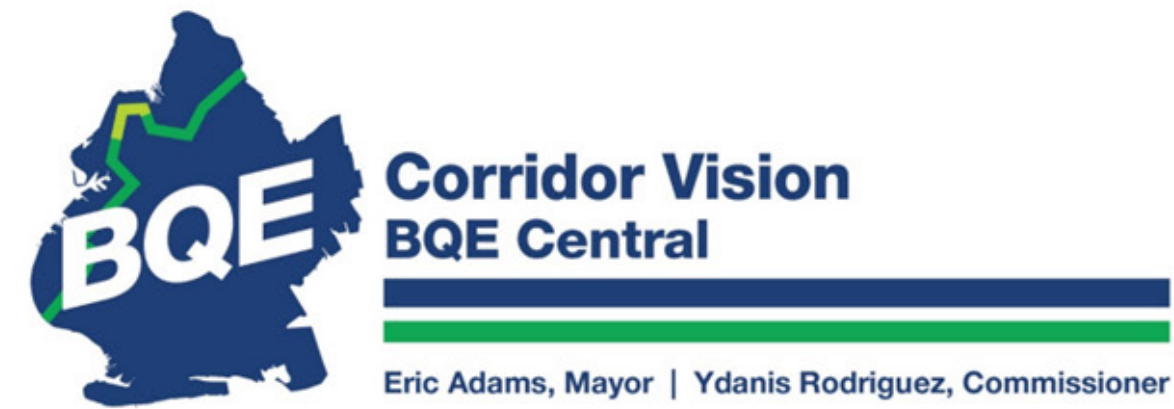


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024



## BQE Central Workshop Round 3: Refining a Vision





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

This presentation includes:

- An update on each of the five focus areas in the BQE Central study area.
- A new design concept for the triple cantilever.
- Project progress and a discussion of the environmental review process and schedule.
- In-person and virtual participants had a Question & Answer session as well as a breakout session.

NYC DOT is sharing updated concepts to understand how stakeholders feel about it. 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** Project Overview
- 2** BQE Central Updates
- 3** Triple Cantilever Concepts
- 4** Project Updates & Environmental Review Process
- 5** Q & A Panel
- 6** Breakout Discussions & Share-out



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2



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## Project Overview

1

3





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

When Mayor Adams took office, he asked NYC 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 largely focused on BQE Central, including the Brooklyn Heights triple cantilever, but we will also provide updates on work that has taken place in BQE North and South.

## BQE Corridor Vision Overview



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

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.

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 North and South sections of the BQE in Brooklyn.

We look forward to pursuing additional grants for the BQE Corridor.

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

## Project Focus & 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



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

## BQE Central Updates

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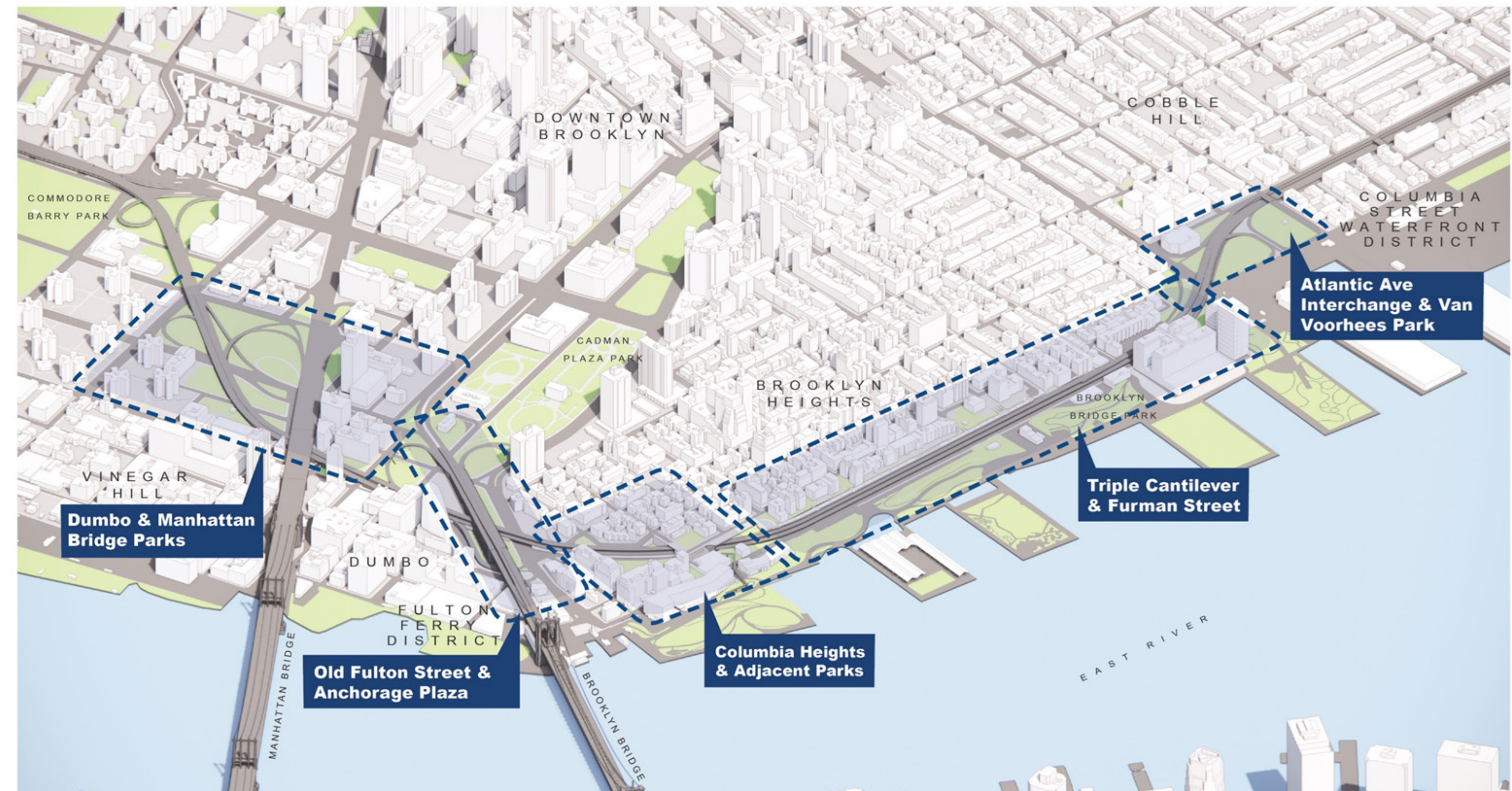


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

When NYC DOT embarked on our visioning process for central corridor, we committed to approaching our concepts with the several goals, including safety, equity, consideration for construction impacts, and sustainability.

With these goals in mind, this presentation contains an update on each of the five focus areas (or “Zones”) throughout the BQE Central corridor.

## BQE Central Focus Areas



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7



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

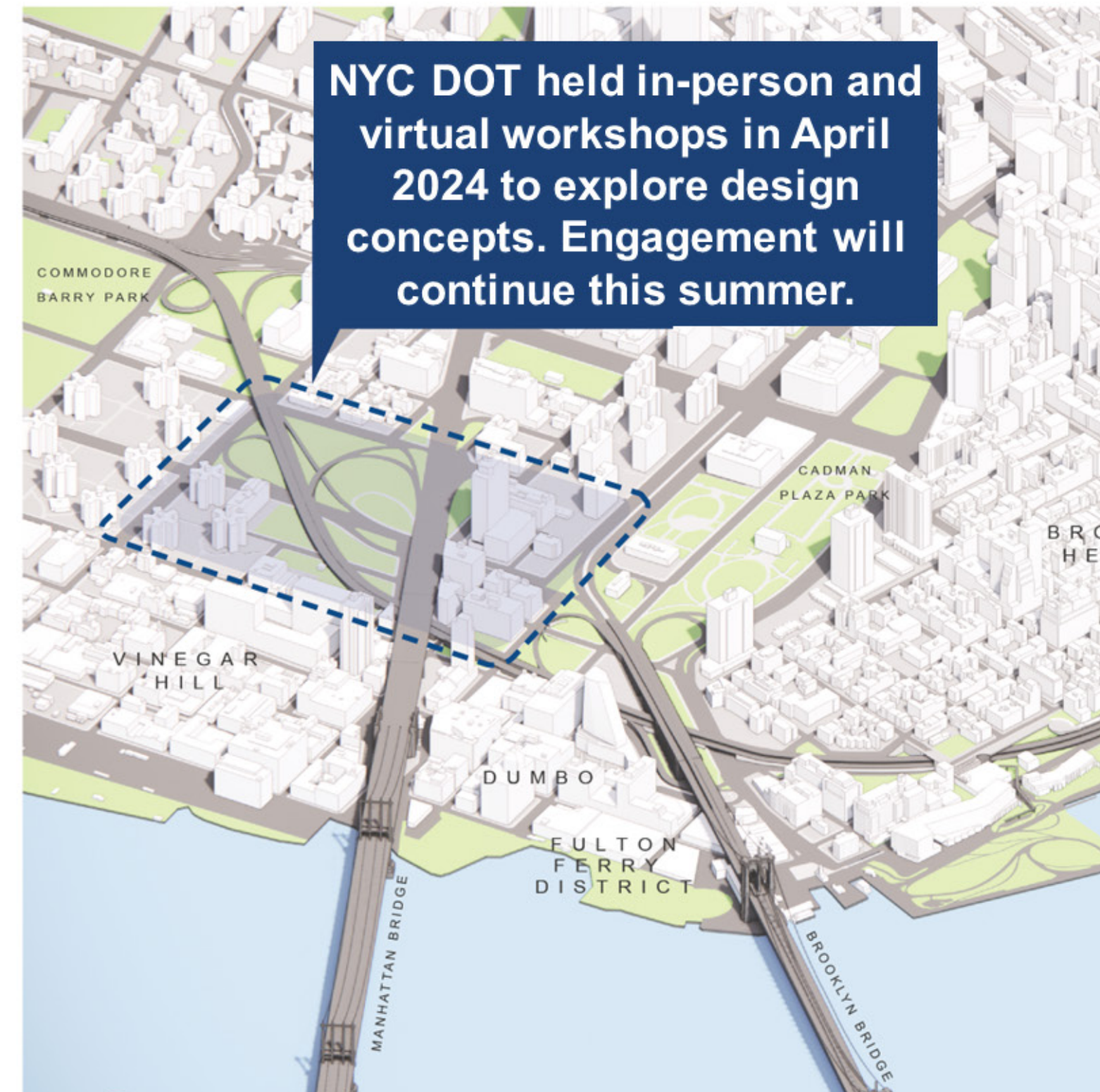
In April 2024, we held in-person and virtual workshops to discuss concepts to enhance the area under and around the Manhattan Bridge.

With community members, we explored three design options that enhance safety, reduce traffic, and connect and improve open space. Workshop participants weighed design concepts together, and made clear that their priorities are safety, reducing traffic, and improving parking in the area. They preferred two of the concepts, shown on the right of the slide.

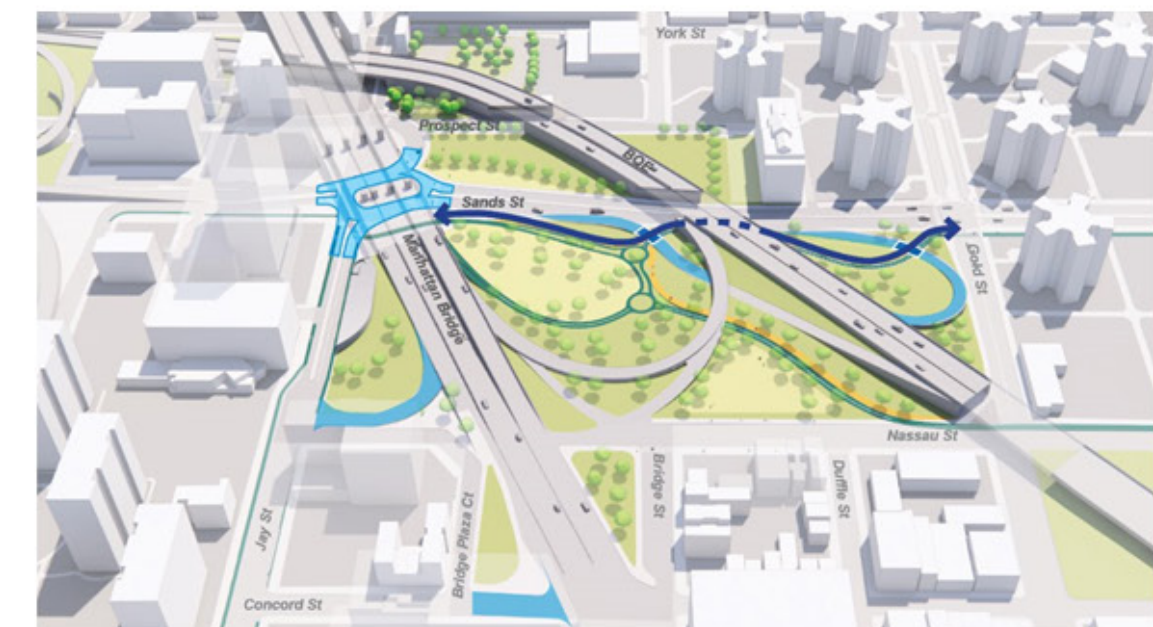
We will continue engagement in summer 2024, to continue to receive input from stakeholders and better on these concepts.

Materials from the Manhattan Bridge workshop and all our meetings are available online at [nyc.gov/bqe](https://nyc.gov/bqe).

## BQE Central Focus Areas | Manhattan Bridge & DUMBO



Concept 1



Concept 3



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

For the Old Fulton & Anchorage Plaza area, participants in the Winter 2023 workshops expressed the need to balance pedestrian flow and increase pedestrian safety across the area.

They were positive about the proposed concepts so NYC DOT has not pursued changes in this area.

## BQE Central Focus Areas | Old Fulton Street & Anchorage Plaza



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9



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Participants who discussed Columbia Heights and the adjacent parks at our Winter 2023 workshops appreciated the proposal to create more seamless connections and improve ADA accessibility to Squibb Park and other green spaces in the area.

They supported enhanced pedestrian and cyclist safety elements, like the proposal for a long raised-crosswalk that would improve the link between Squibb Park, Chapin Playground, and Fruit Street Sitting Area.

Similarly, we have not pursued changes to the concept for this area.

## BQE Central Focus Areas | Columbia Heights & Adjacent Parks



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10



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

In June 2023, NYC DOT shared three concepts for the Atlantic Avenue Interchange that attempted to balance the many competing uses and modes relying on this interchange. It was clear in that meeting that the proposed concepts largely did not align with community priorities. However, it was well-received that NYC DOT would study closing the Queens-bound on-ramp, so we are evaluating this possibility through our traffic study and coordinating with state and federal partners about this option.

In May 2024, the Mayor announced that the City will undertake a Red Hook master planning effort for the waterfront piers, including Piers 7 and 8 adjacent to the Atlantic Avenue Interchange. This effort will be led by the NYC Economic Development Corporation. With the large amount of space that is newly available to plan, there is opportunity to enhance safety and connections for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as improve transportation circulation for the port.

NYC DOT is coordinating with all involved agencies as the City completes its Master Planning process for the piers. Any new concepts for Atlantic Ave Interchange would be planned in coordination with that effort, as it will likely have significant effect on the transportation needs at this interchange. We must plan comprehensively to accommodate any future use.

In the near term, DOT will also continue to explore additional ways to enhance safety at the interchange for pedestrians and cyclists.

## BQE Central Focus Areas | Atlantic Avenue Interchange



### Following the June 2023 workshop:

- NYC DOT will study closing the Queens-bound on-ramp
- City will begin outreach and master planning to transform the Brooklyn Marine Terminal. Agencies will coordinate.
- NYC DOT will explore additional interventions to make the interchange more comfortable for pedestrians and cyclists



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11



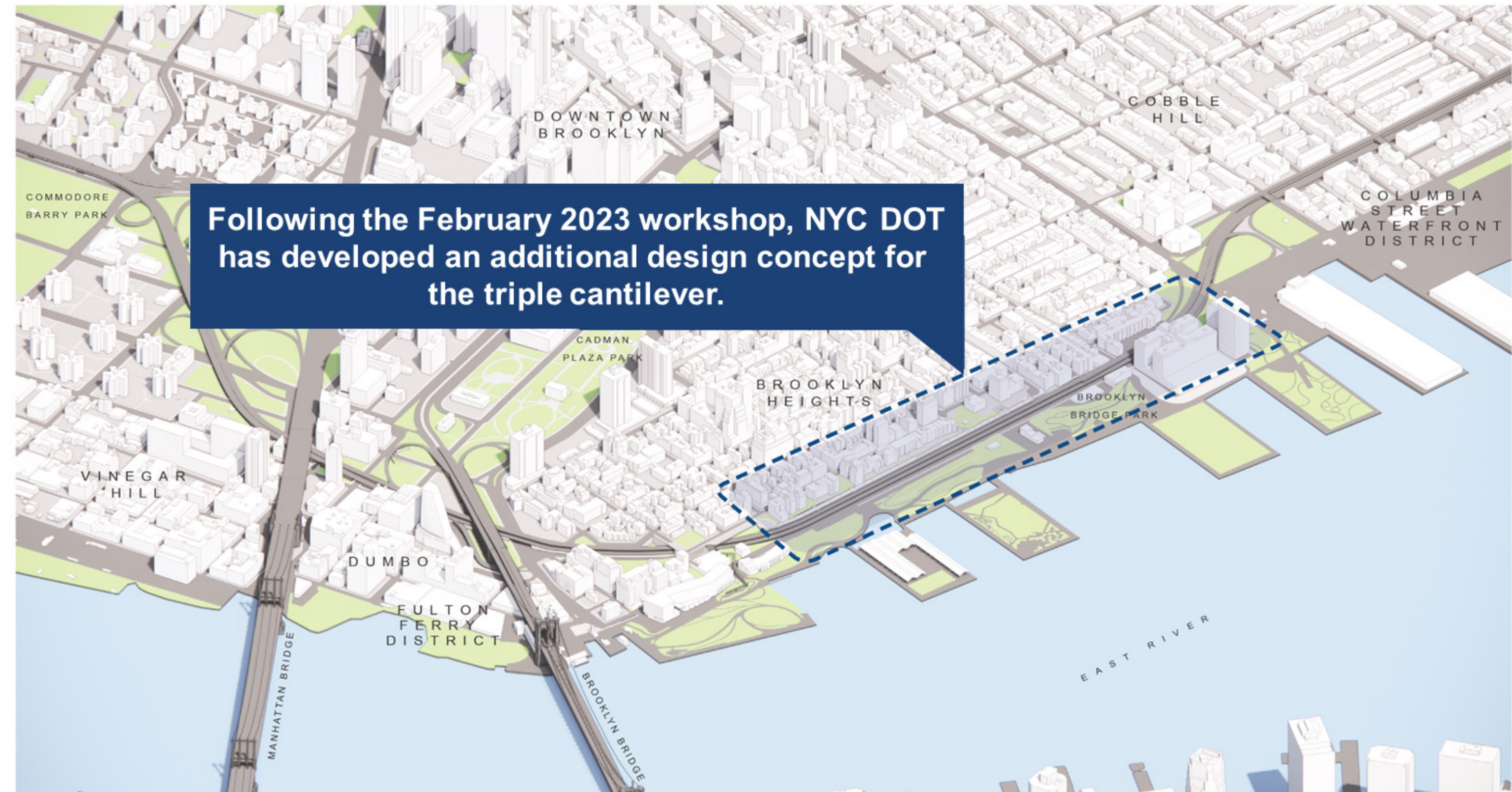
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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

We last conducted a workshop on this area in Winter 2023, where we brought three design concepts for the Triple Cantilever for discussion. Responsive to feedback from those workshops and other stakeholder engagements, NYC DOT developed an additional design concept to consider for the triple cantilever.

## BQE Central Focus Areas | Triple Cantilever & Furman Streets



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12



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## Triple Cantilever Concepts

3

13





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

First some background on previous concepts shown to the public — In Winter 2023, NYC DOT presented three design concepts: the Terraces, the Lookout, and the Stoop.

For these concepts, we heard concerns about the visual impacts on Brooklyn Bridge Park and concerns about increased proximity to nearby buildings. Some participants did not like the idea of an expanded Promenade.

However, there was strong support for more access points to Brooklyn Bridge Park at Montague Street and/or Clark Street.

Given this feedback, NYC DOT wanted to explore an additional concept that is designed with a lighter touch.

Worth noting, in the Winter 2023 concepts, NYC DOT spent a significant amount of time on connections for pedestrians and bicyclists from Brooklyn Heights to Brooklyn Bridge Park. That's why in this round of new concepts in Summer 2024, we are focused primarily on a beautiful and minimalist bridge engineering design. NYC DOT will return in the future to creating connections from the Promenade to the Park.

## Design Concepts from the Previous Meeting



The Terraces

This concept's closer proximity to 360 Furman raised concerns, and participants questioned whether two rather than three lanes in each direction would allow greater distance



The Lookout

Strong support for the more direct and numerous access points to Brooklyn Bridge Park under this concept



The Stoop

Concern about how the design concentrates access to Brooklyn Bridge Park, particularly with the highway configuration around the Promenade's transition to the Park

Some participants raised concerns about expanding the Promenade space; others supported the expansion but thought this depiction was barren and too expansive, requiring greater activation with programming and/or further design elements



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14





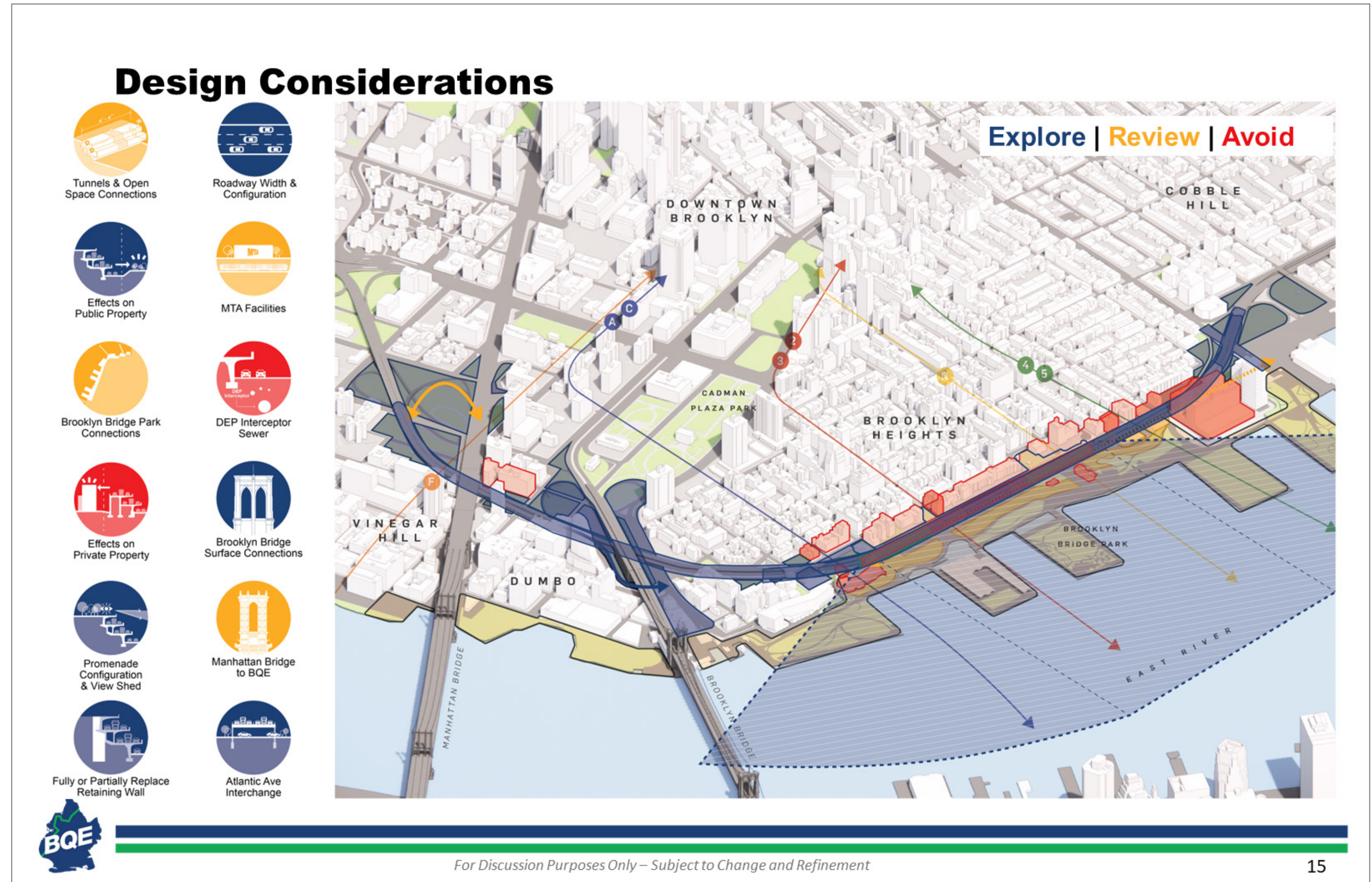
# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

In past workshops, we presented several design considerations that would guide our work. There are several design considerations in this section of the BQE, which means that any design concept must achieve a lot in an extremely limited space:

- The highway is shoehorned between Furman Street and Brooklyn Bridge Park to its west and the Promenade and Brooklyn Heights above. It is a narrow space with numerous pinch-points due to existing buildings and infrastructure.
- We must be thoughtful to avoid effects on private property and the gem of Brooklyn Bridge Park while upholding the historic nature of this neighborhood and the Promenade.
- Additionally, we must grapple with underground infrastructure – including several subway lines and a DEP interceptor.
- Finally, NYC DOT's top priority is safety and so we need to build this interstate highway to modern safety standards and collaborate with our partners at NYS DOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

We previously explored concepts that would **avoid** impacts to MTA infrastructure, but we have continued to evaluate our work near the Clark Street Fan Plant, which is partly integrated into the BQE structure, and we are **now** reviewing potential opportunities to alter this MTA Facility.

To help us with this complex effort, we are working with a team of New York based designers and engineers, including Schlaich Bergermann Partner, WXY Studio, and Bjarke Ingels Group.





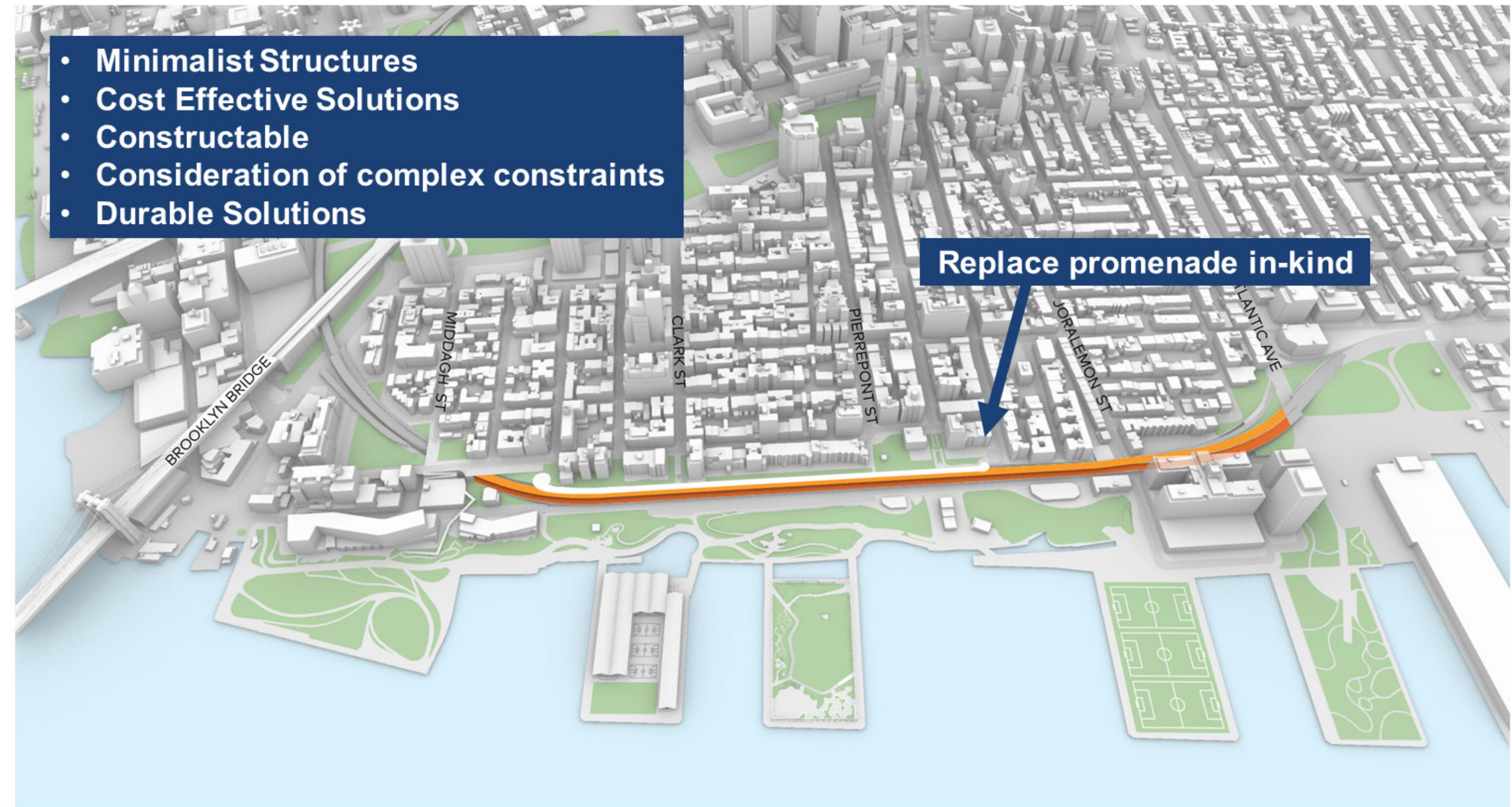
# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT took a fresh look at the triple cantilever portion of the BQE with a goal of producing something elegant, cost effective, constructable, and durable, that takes into consideration the complex constraints noted in the prior slide.

We also wanted to create a positive and recognizable moment for both users and those passing by, especially recapturing precious open space in the area.

## Our Mandate

- Minimalist Structures
- Cost Effective Solutions
- Constructable
- Consideration of complex constraints
- Durable Solutions



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16



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

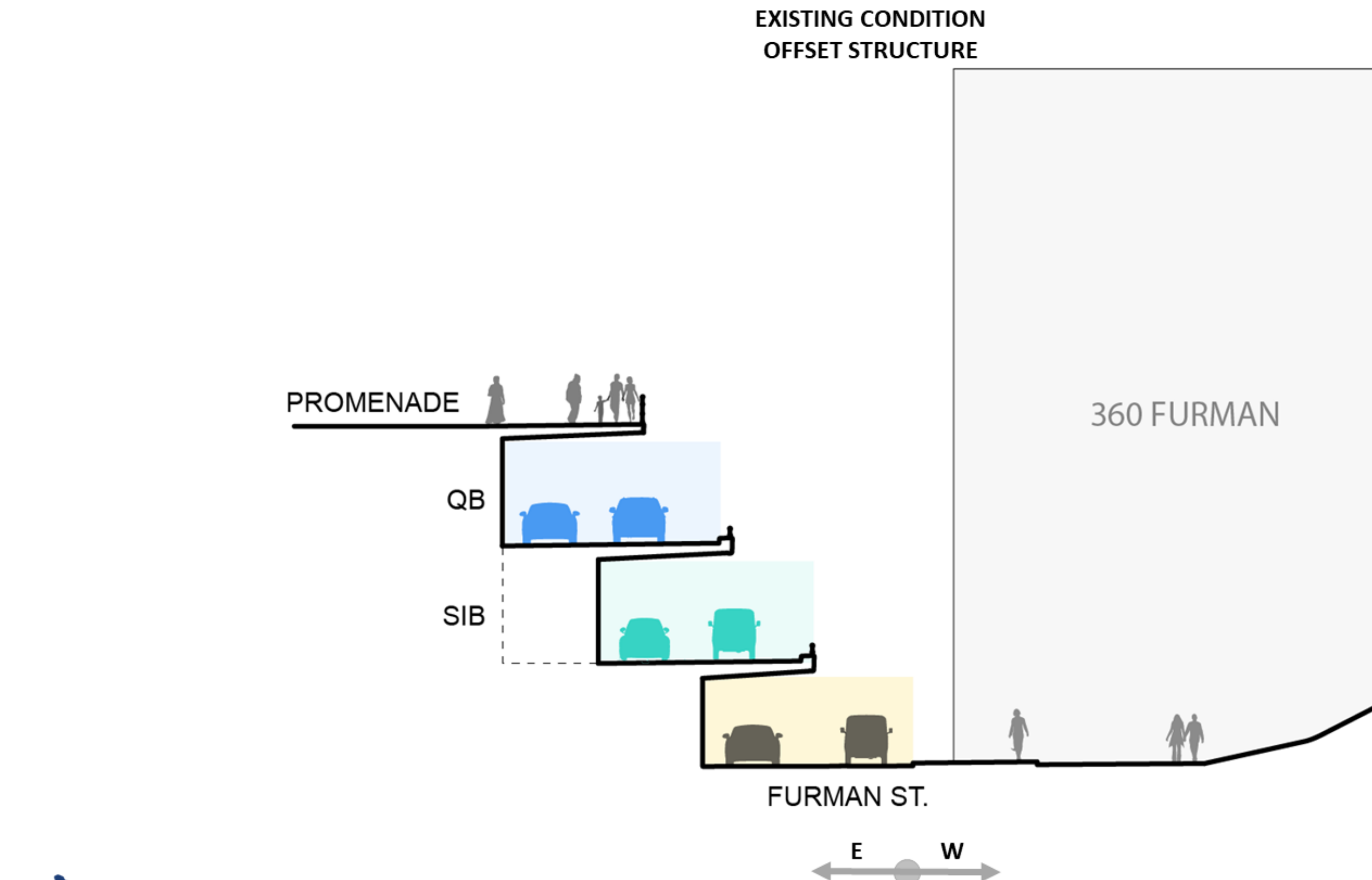
The existing condition, which you see here, has offset driving lanes for the Queensbound and Staten Island bound lanes. It is supported at the very bottom on a wall which is east of Furman.

To orient you, the cross-section shown is a view from Furman Street facing South. See the arrows below pointing East and West.

For this discussion, we can classify design options by the geometric position of the Queensbound and Staten Island bound lanes – which in this case are offset.

In the next slides, when we say “East of Furman” we mean toward the Promenade, the current Triple Cantilever structure, and retaining wall. And when we say “West of Furman,” we mean toward the sidewalk along Furman St adjacent to Brooklyn Bridge Park, and the waterfront.

## SECTION MATRIX | EXISTING CONDITION



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17



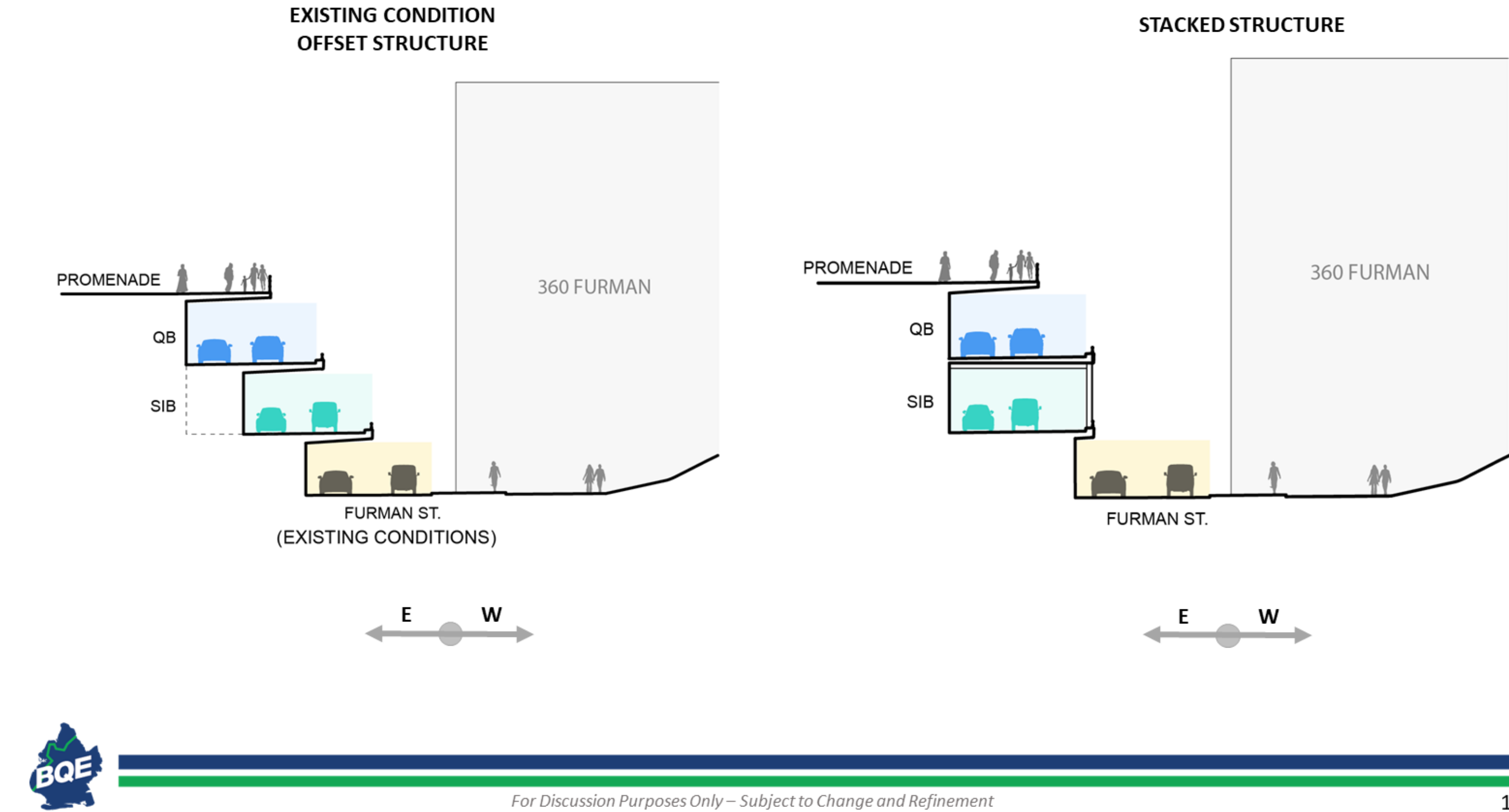


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

You can see the existing offset structure on your left.

If we are able to move the Staten Island bound lane east, we will have a slimmer, stacked structure – shown in the image to the right.

## SECTION MATRIX | STACKED STRUCTURE



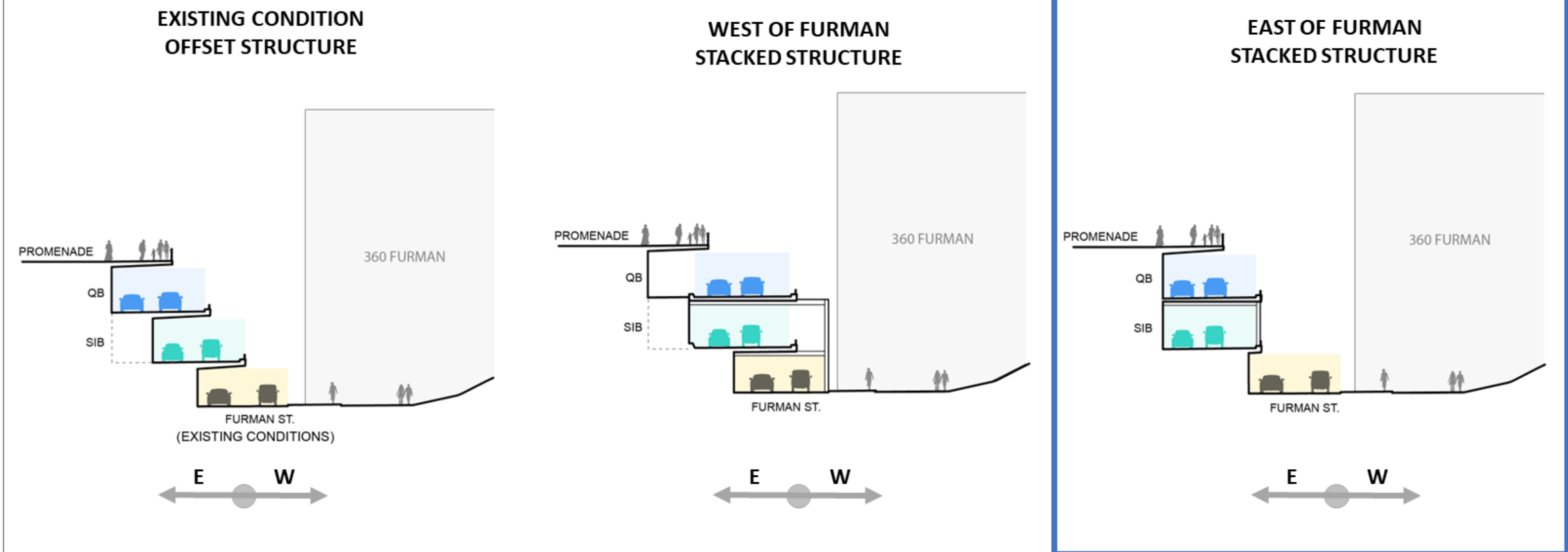


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

For comparison, in Winter 2023, NYC DOT showed concepts that were supported by a structure that was constructed west of Furman Street -- shown here in the middle. You can see how this creates a larger structure over Furman St.

For this reason, in this design concept NYC DOT has pursued the concept furthest on the right, highlighted in blue, a stacked structure east of Furman.

## SECTION MATRIX | LOCATION AT FURMAN



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19



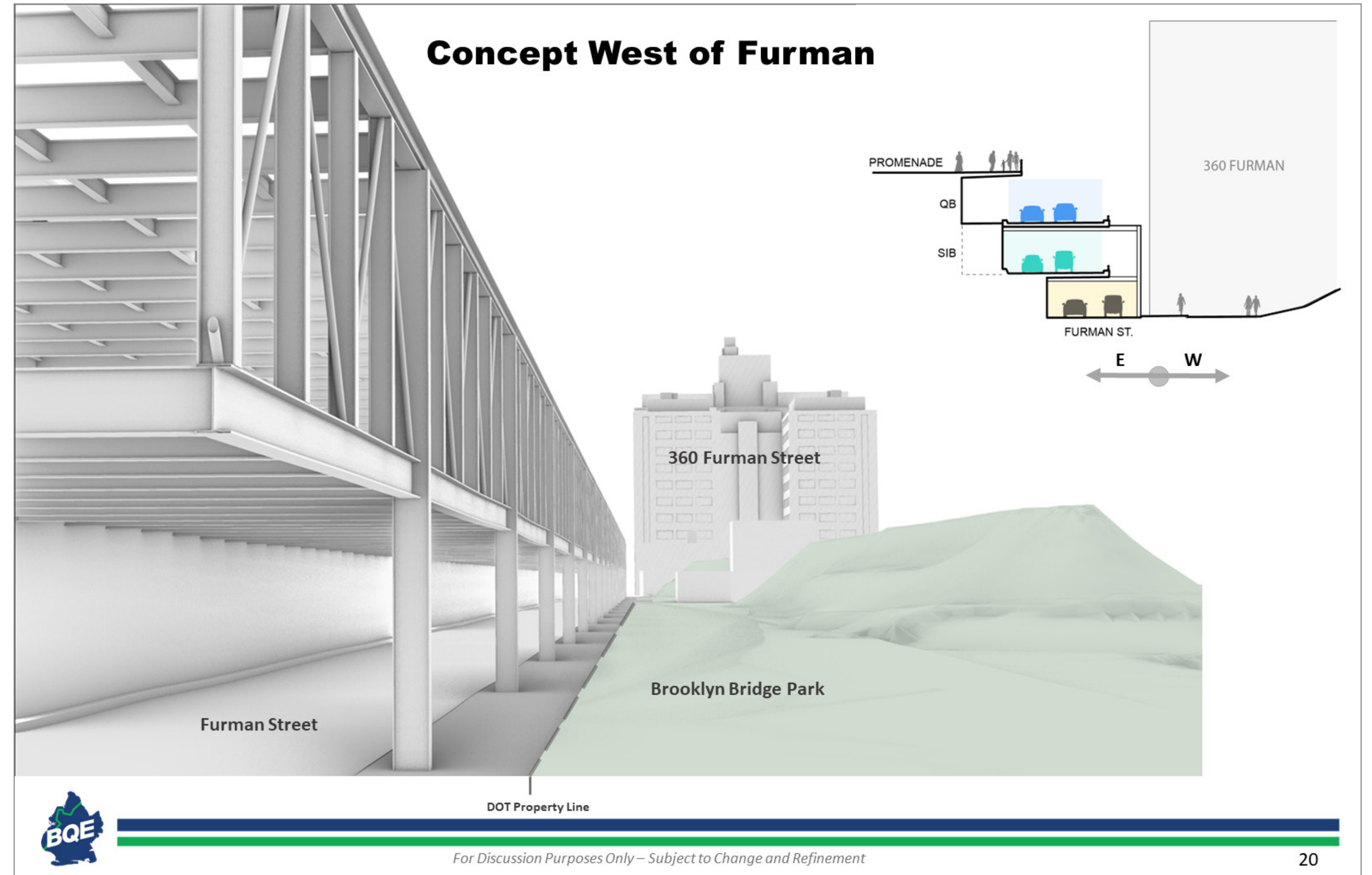
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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT found that the biggest impact we can have in designing is not with a flashy design, but if we limited the extent of the structure reaching over Furman and toward Brooklyn Bridge Park as much as possible. To picture this, we have created a basic view along Furman Street showing a structure which reaches over the street and the columns fall on the sidewalk along Furman St.

In this view, we limited the amount of columns by creating a bridge type solution, but you can still see how the structure reaches over Furman St and is closer to the Park.



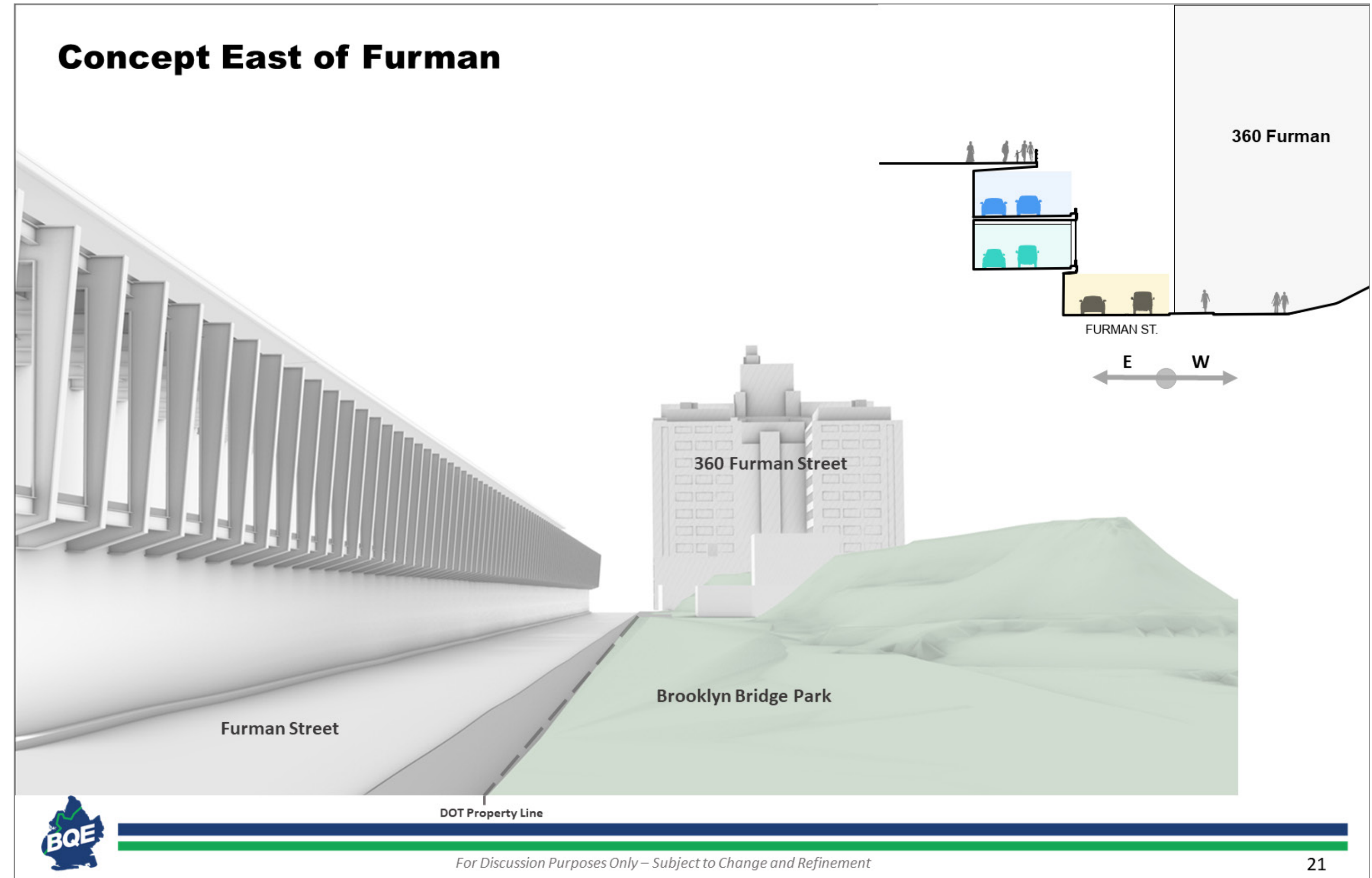


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

In contrast, this is the new “East of Furman” approach.

By moving the structure East of Furman, we are able to achieve an open space comparable to what you have today, despite the fact that the highway would be 20% wider when built to modern highway safety standards.

For that reason, we have pursued only East of Furman solutions in the new designs we are showing in this presentation.





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

When considering the type of structure you can build here, we focused on a Portal Type Structure with closely spaced columns. Two approaches to the portal structure are a Linear Frame or a Triangular Frame. These are attractive not only because they are efficient, but also because their architectural appearance, including repetition of the frames, creates a lighter structure with a more compact footprint that is simple and beautifully designed.

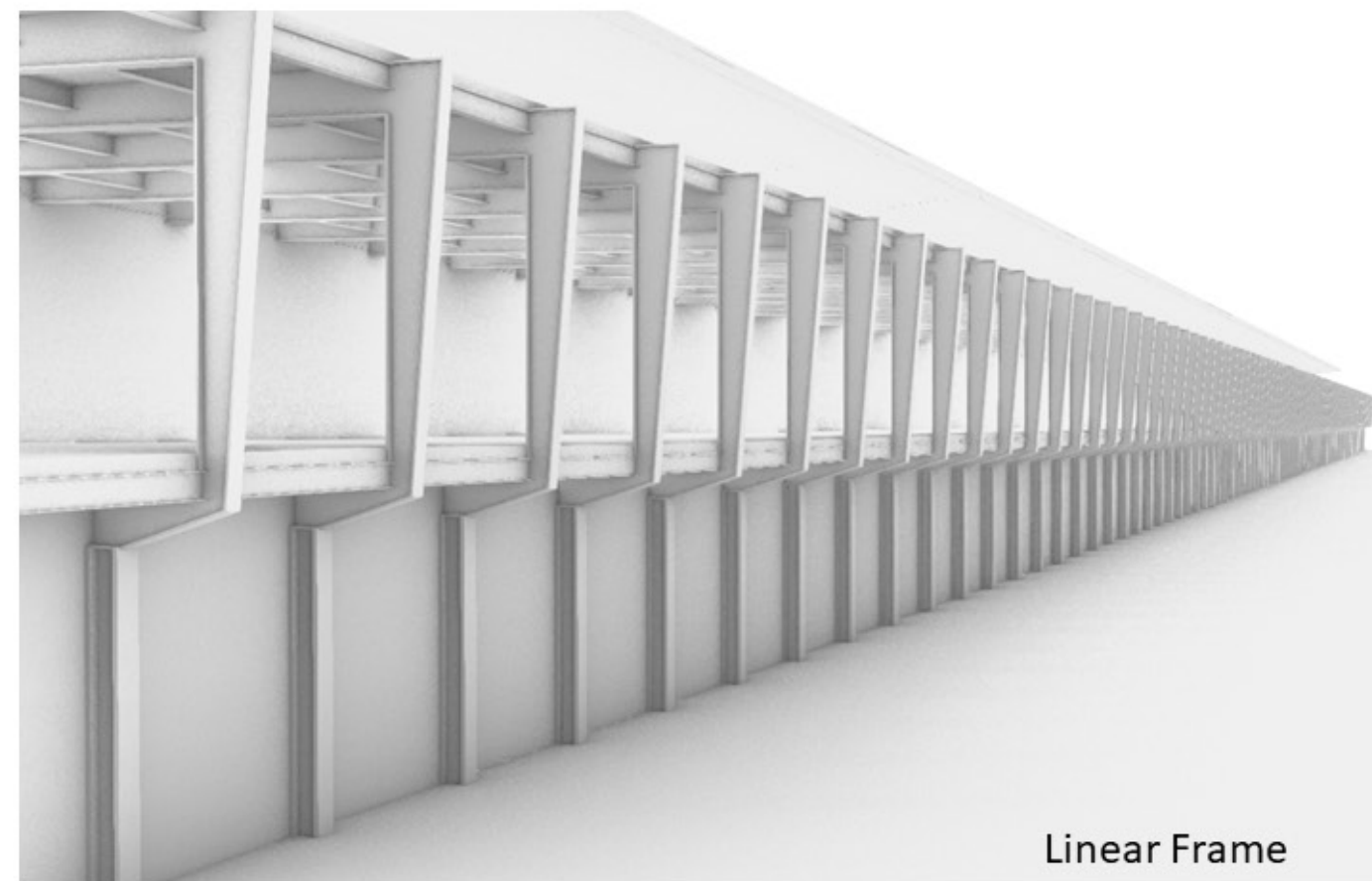
This concept would require a replacement of the structure's retaining wall. NYC DOT continues to study the structure and refine this approach, but as in all of the design concepts the City has previously shared, there is a design consideration to avoid effects on private property and minimize construction impacts.

Please note: the retaining wall on the Staten Island-bound level currently supports the Queens-bound level. This wall would need to be removed, and the area behind excavated, so that a new retaining wall could be constructed further east. This would allow for the construction of a new roadway that shifts to the east as well.

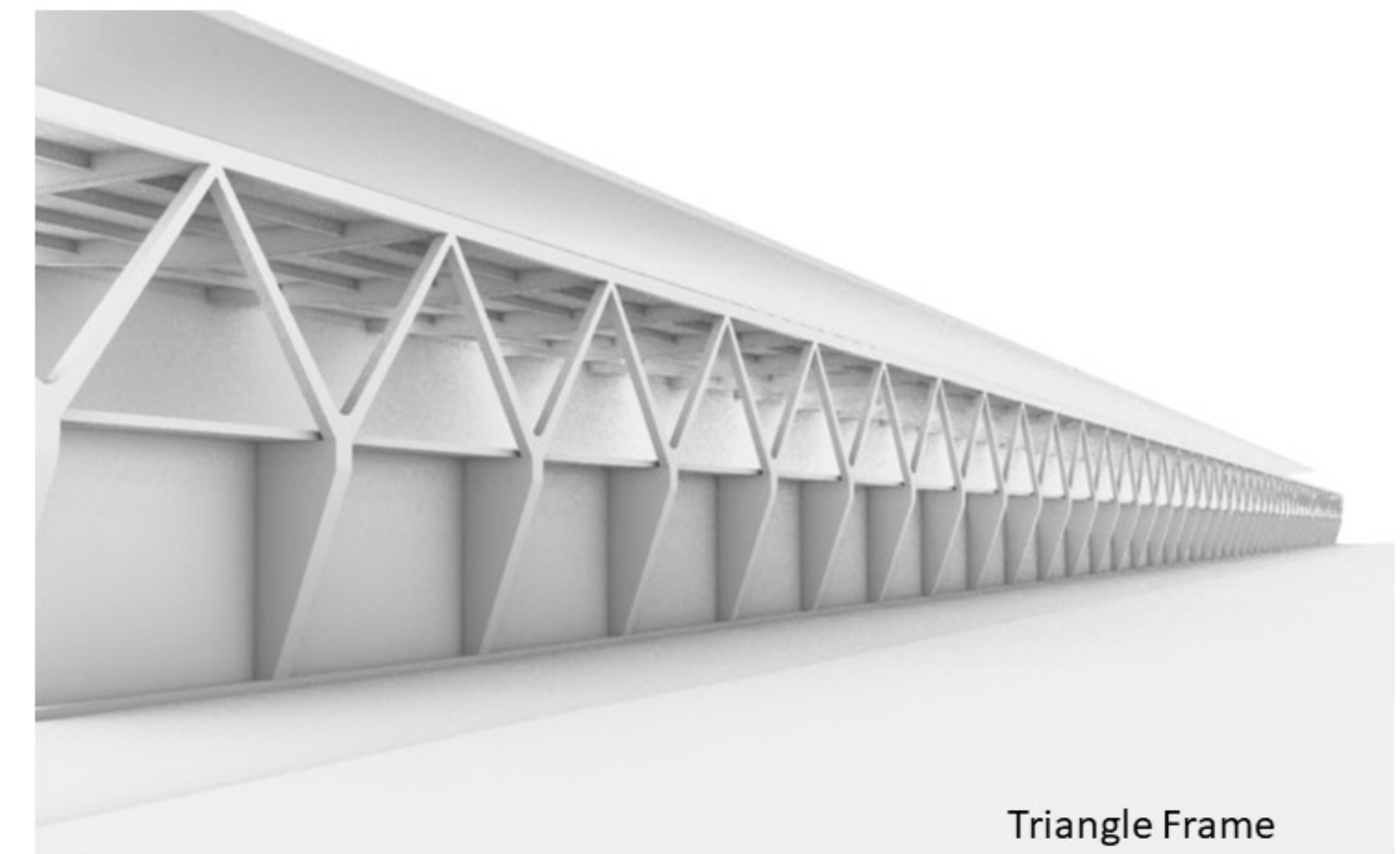
A real benefit is that if we build a new retaining wall, which is separate from the BQE structure, vibrations would be better mitigated than they would be if we were only to rehabilitate the existing wall.

As NYC DOT learns more about the structure and refines this concept, we will share those details with the public.

## Portal Design Options



Linear Frame



Triangle Frame



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22

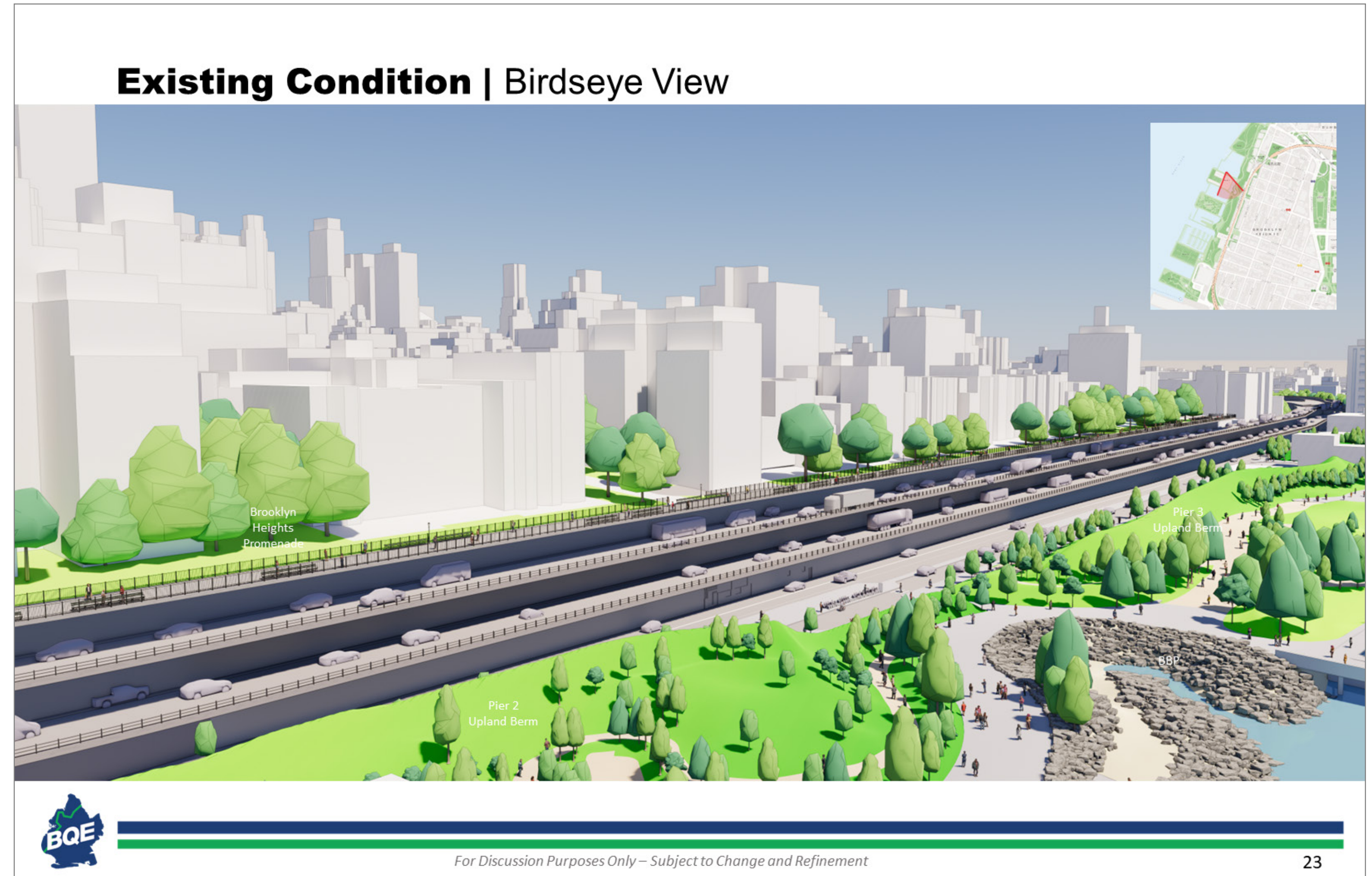


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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

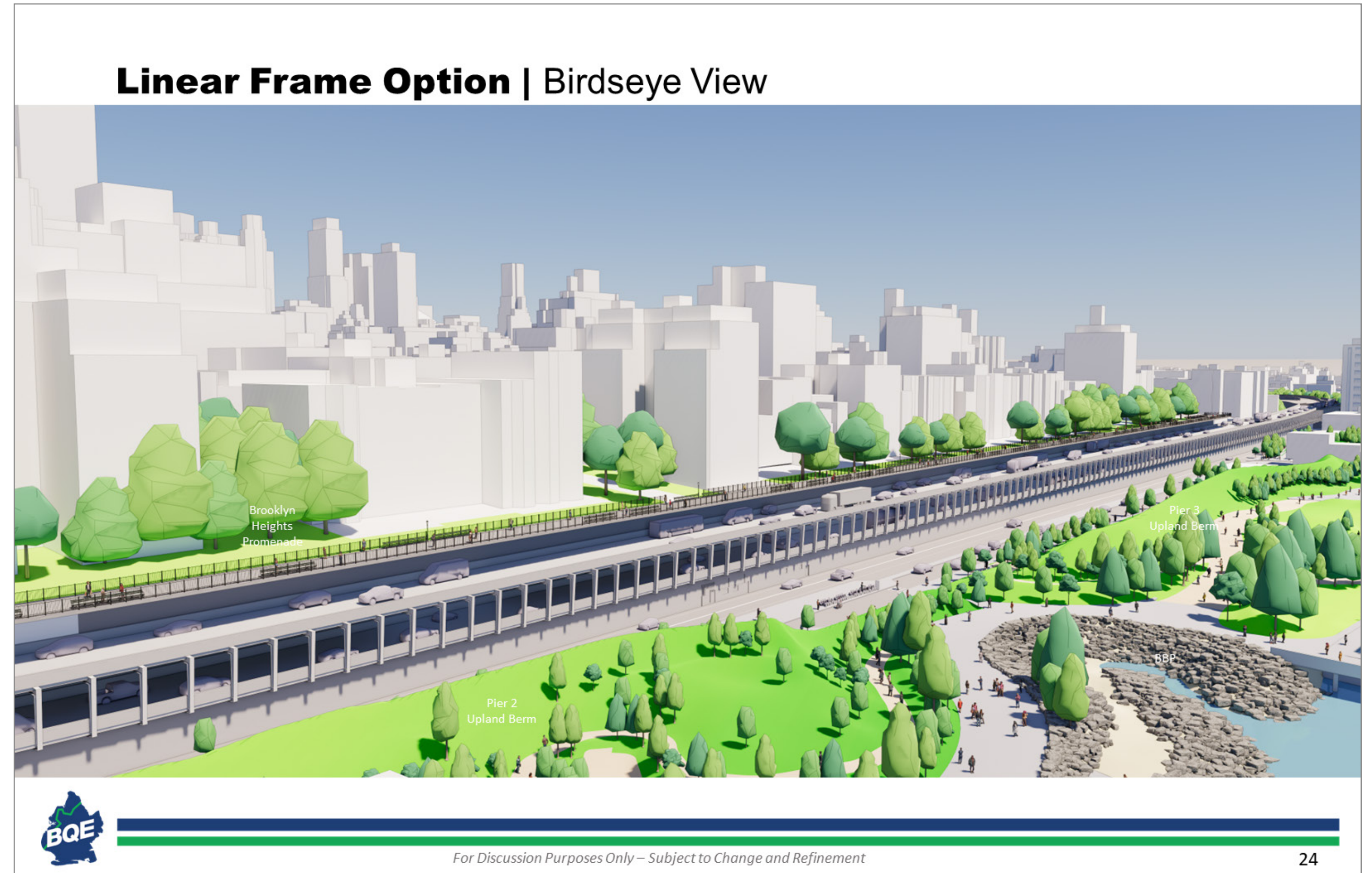
The first view is of the existing conditions. Here, you can see the offset Queens and Staten Island bound lanes.





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

With a linear frame option, we can create a slim design with minimal and efficient structures supporting the Queens bound lane. Here you can see a linear frame option.





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Here is an option with a triangle frame, which creates a different aesthetic.

## Triangle Frame Option | Birdseye View



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25

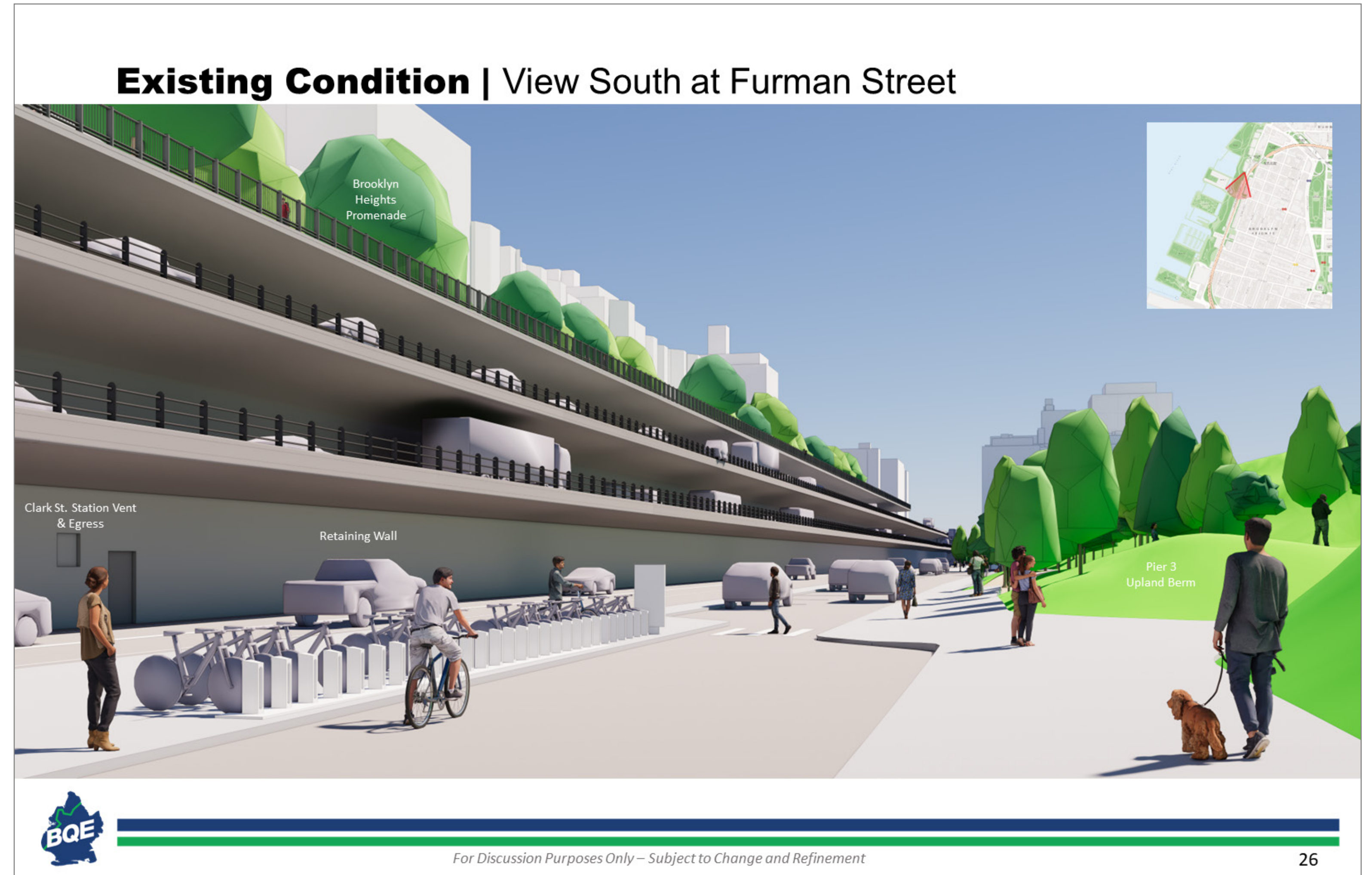


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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

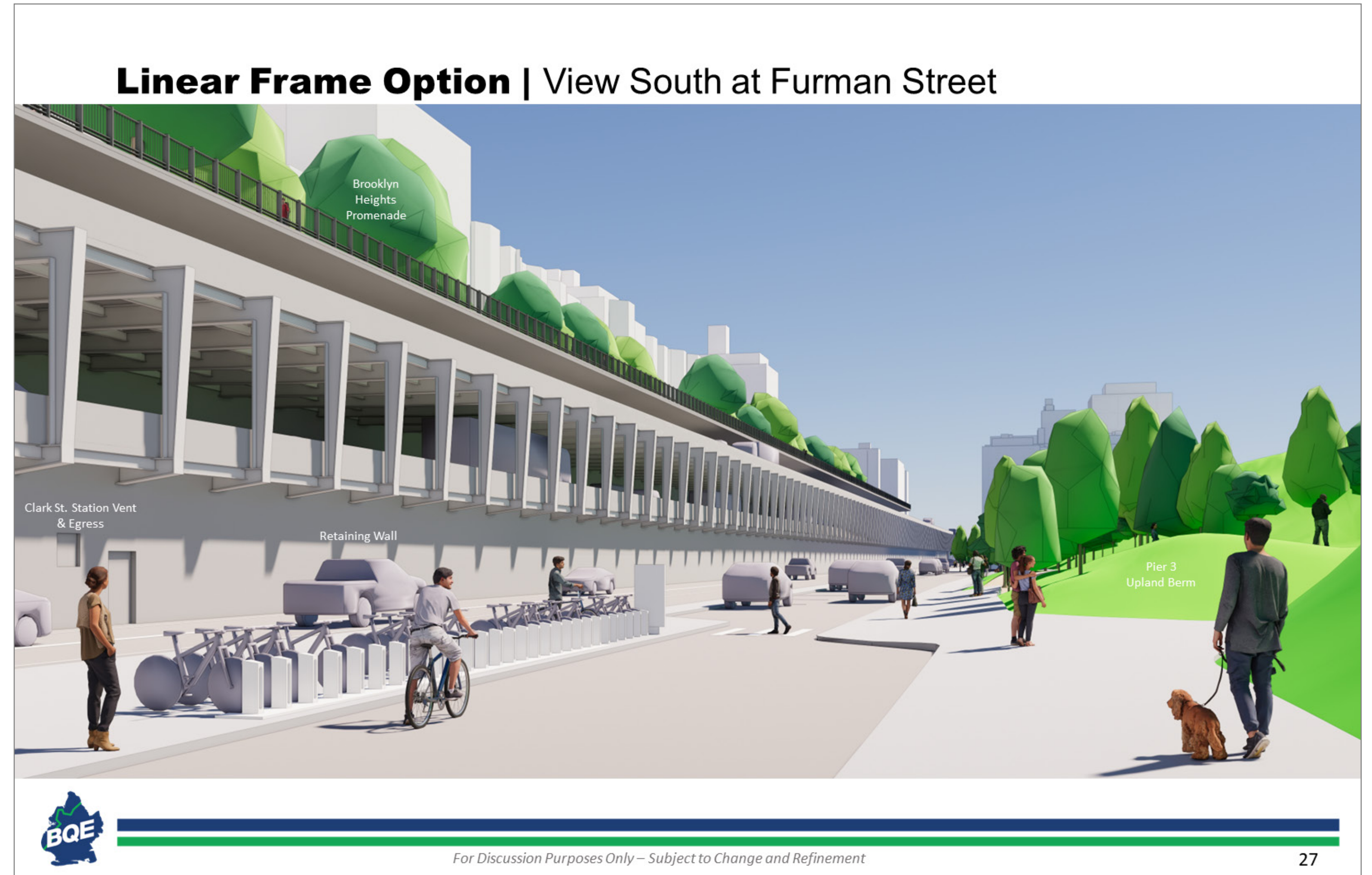
This is the existing view from Furman Street looking south.





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

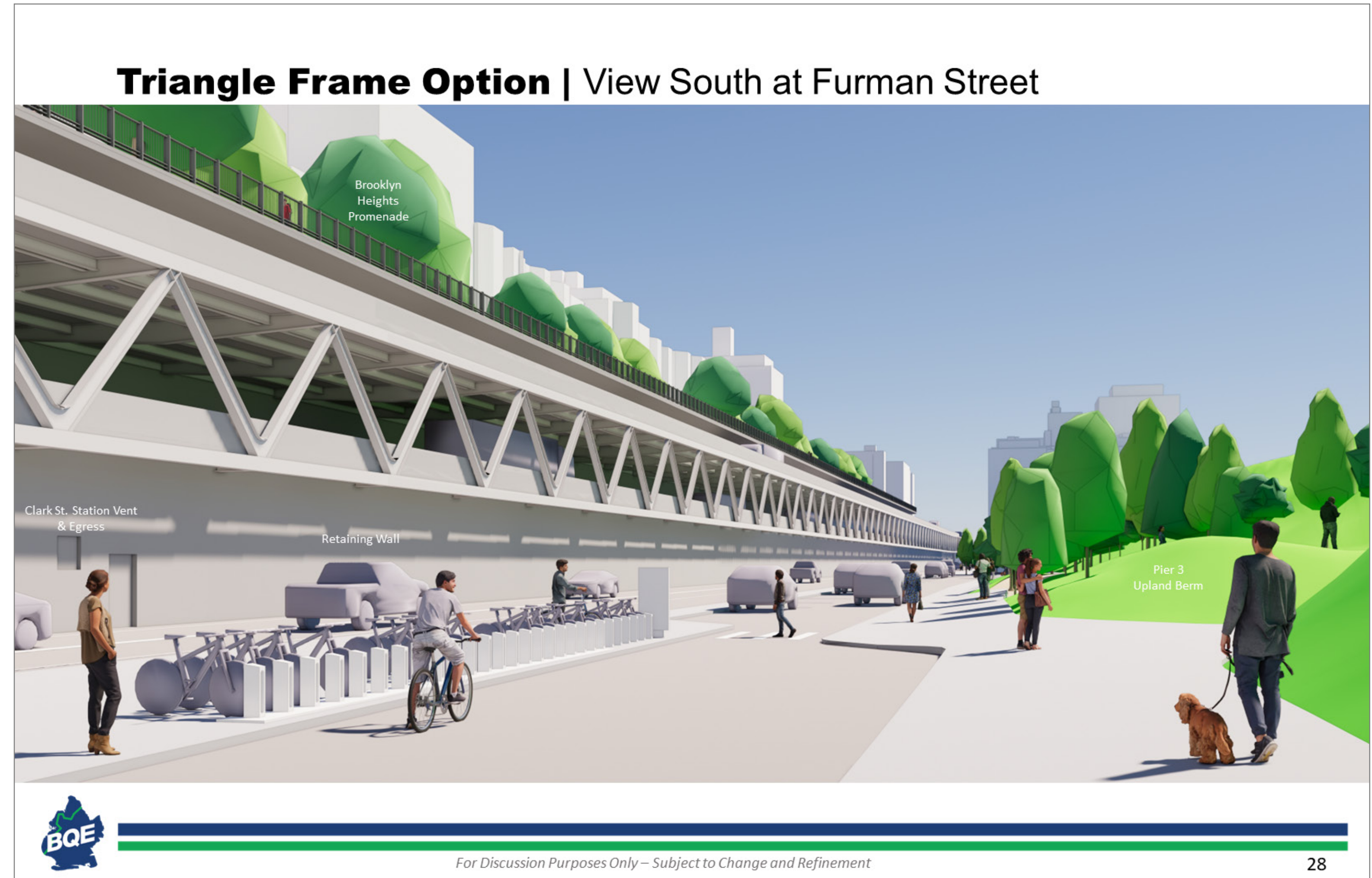
You can see that the portal structure provides a feeling of openness for those traveling along Furman Street. As you look south, the linear frames start to provide a screening effect, minimizing the view of traffic on the Staten Island bound lane.





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Again, here is a view with the triangle frame option.





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

This is the existing view from inside Brooklyn Bridge Park, looking East toward the BQE.

## Existing Condition | View from Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 2



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29



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

You can see that the linear frame structure has a gentle rhythm of supports which screens the Staten Island bound traffic from the park.

## Linear Frame Option | View from Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 2



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30



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Alternately, here is the view from Brooklyn Bridge Park with a triangle frame option.

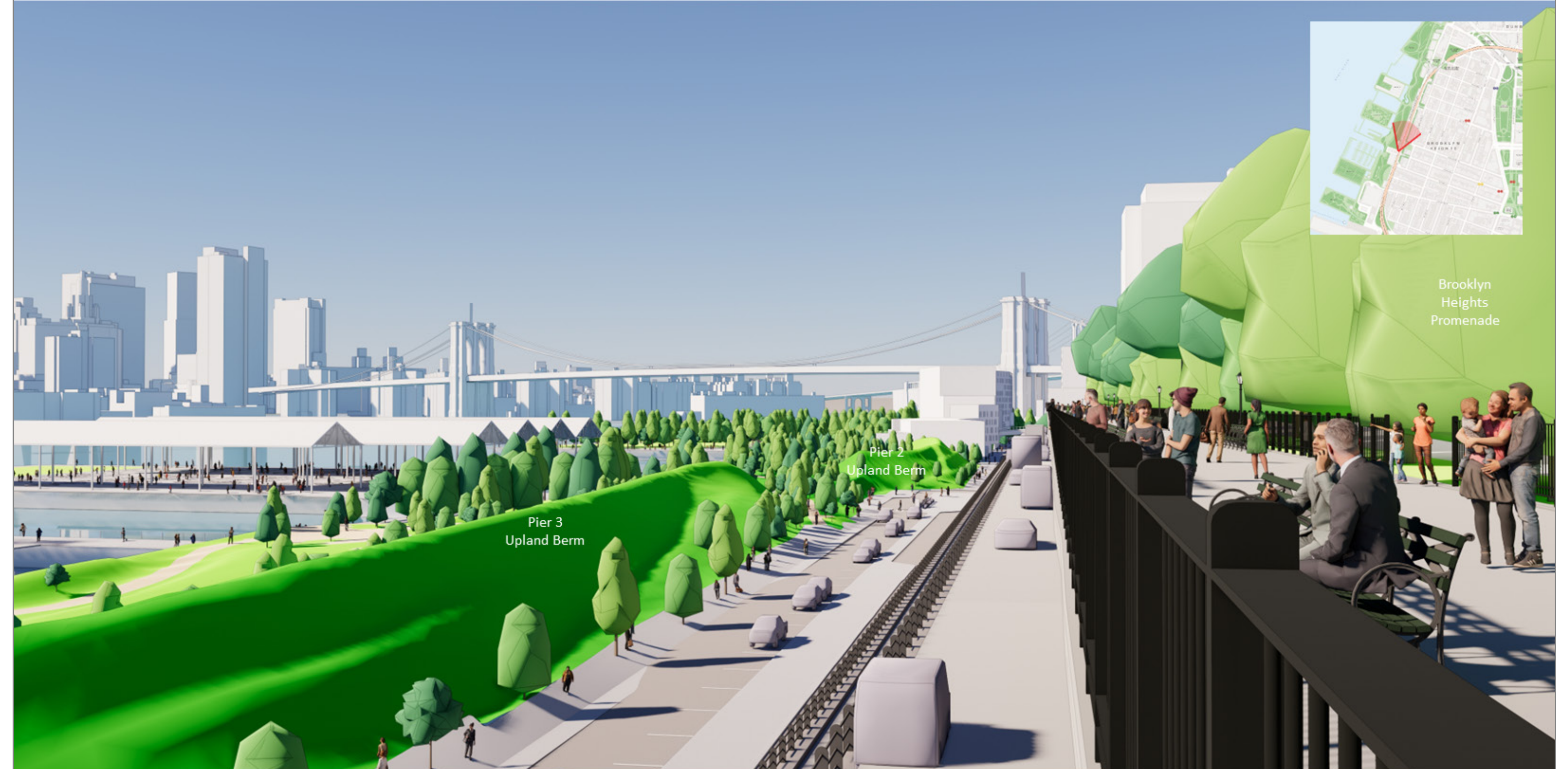




# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Now we are on the Brooklyn Heights promenade, looking toward the Brooklyn Bridge.

## Existing Condition | View from Brooklyn Heights Promenade



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32



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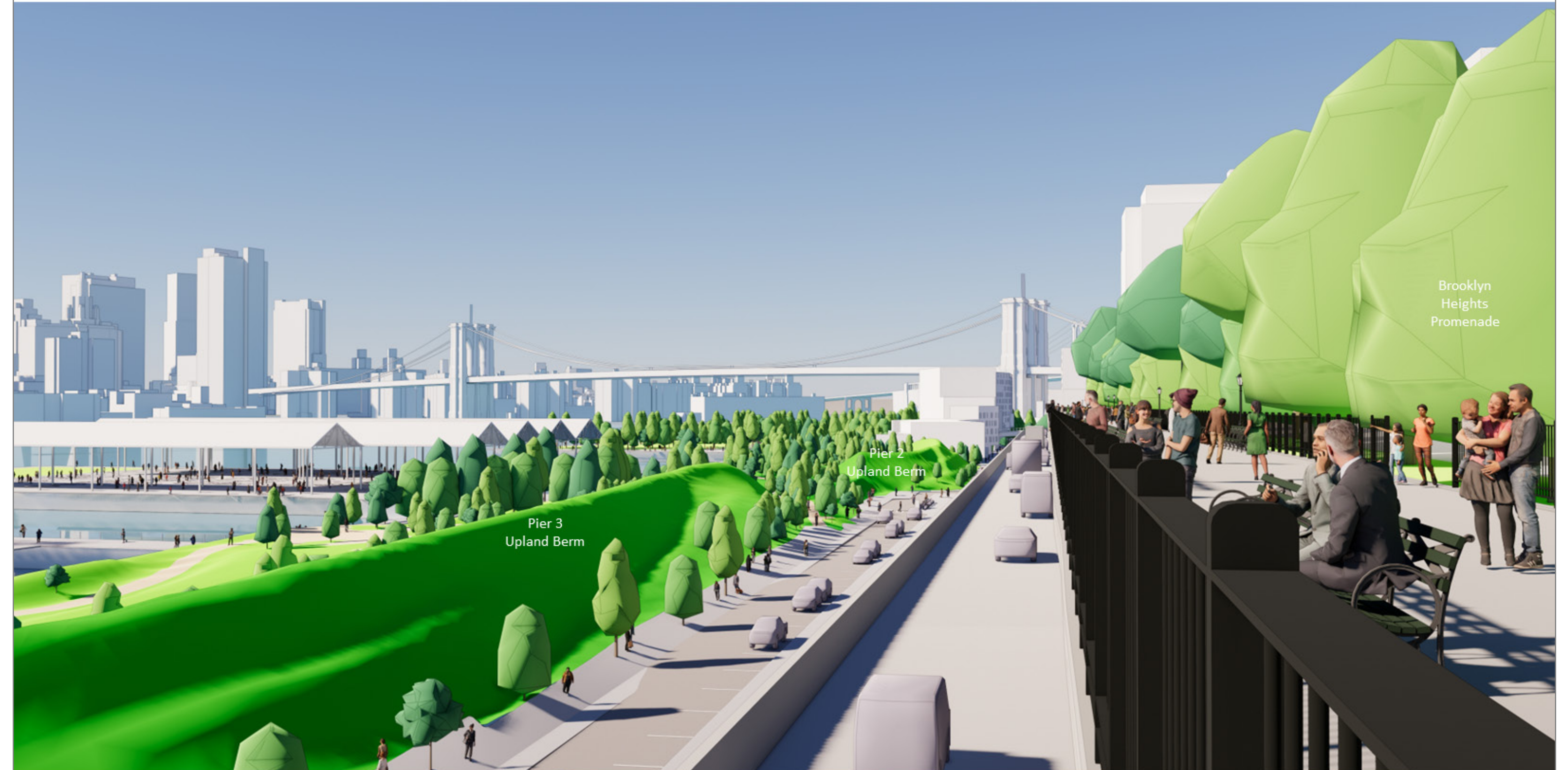


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

You can see that the stacked structure maintains similar views to what currently exists. The structure would look the same from the Promenade, whether with linear or triangle frames.

Please note that the new concepts shown try to preserve the experience offered by the Promenade today. NYC DOT would replace the Promenade in-kind.

## Linear & Triangle Frame | View from Brooklyn Heights Promenade



*\*Promenade to be replaced in-kind, and impact to existing trees to be confirmed.*

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33

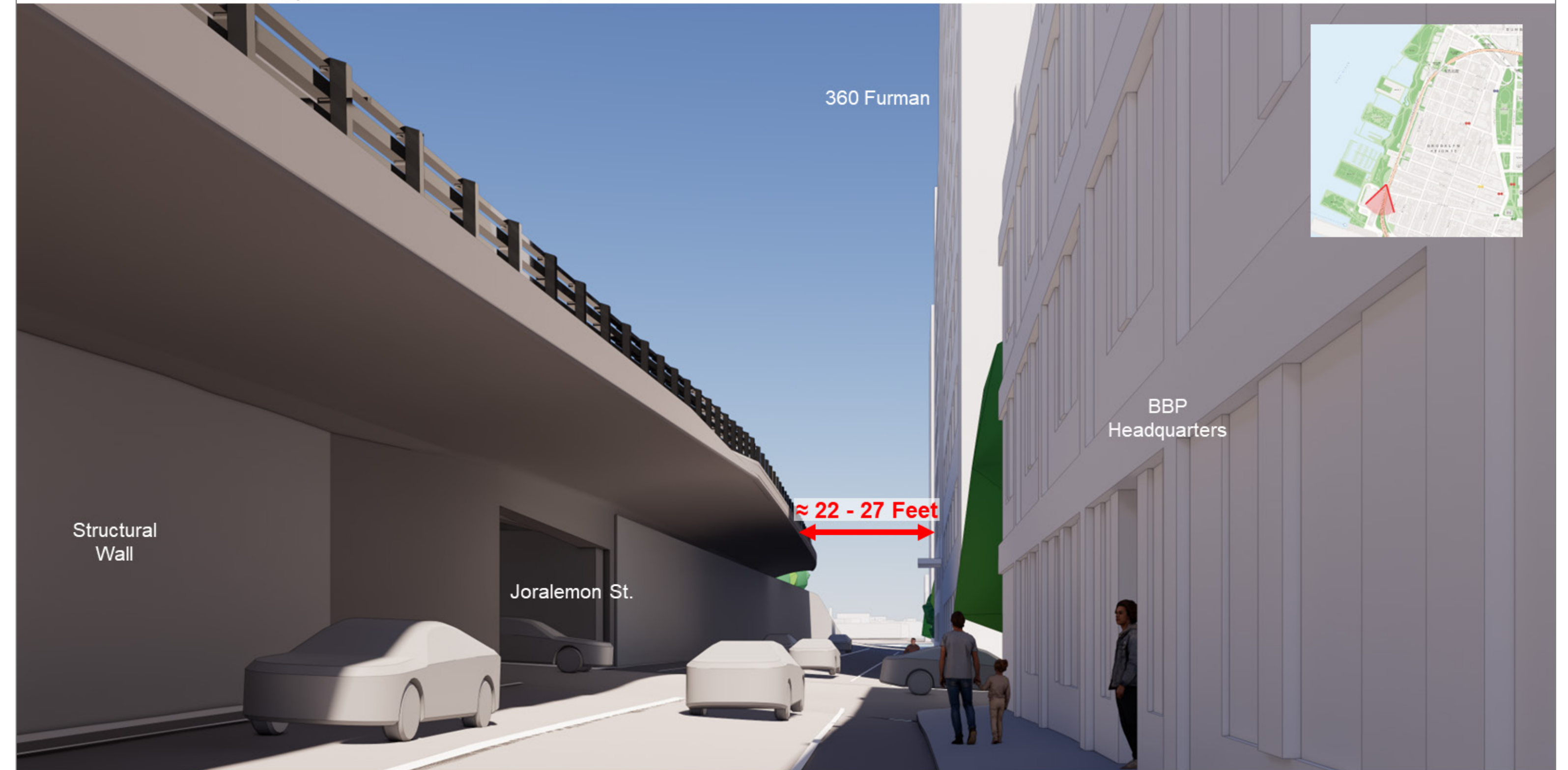




# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

At 360 Furman Street, clearance to the existing structure ranges from 22-27 feet from the building.

## Existing Condition | View at 360 Furman Street



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34



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

In a two-lane configuration, the distance from 360 Furman would be a range of 21-27 feet.

A three-lane configuration could bring the structure closer to the building by approximately 8-10 feet.

## Linear Frame Option | View at 360 Furman Street



*\*For a 3-Lane BQE, the clearance would be reduced by 8 to 10 feet compared to what is depicted*

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35

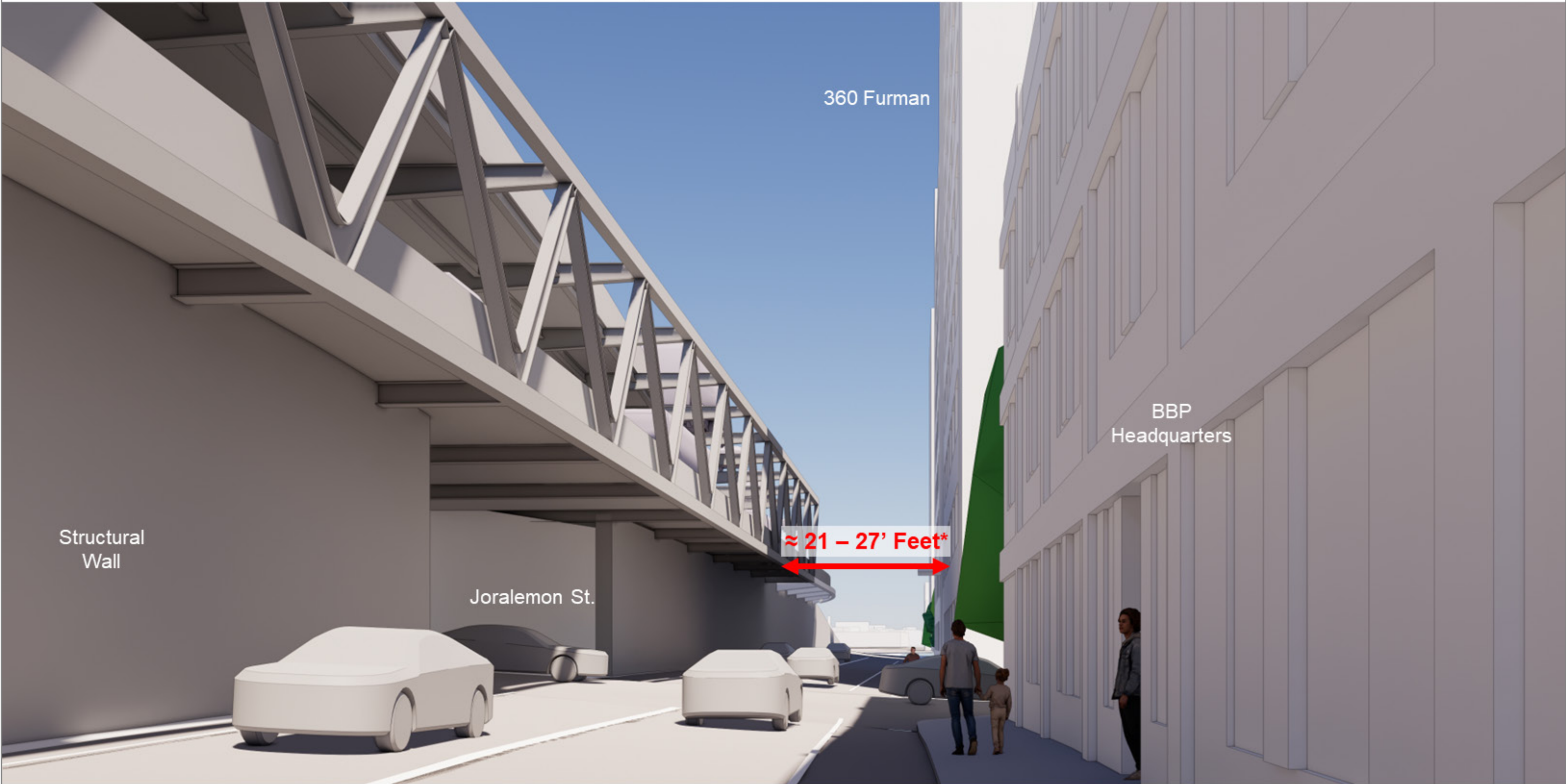




# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

It is shown here with a triangle frame.

**Triangle Frame Option | View on 360 Furman Street**



*\*For a 3-Lane BQE, the clearance would be reduced by 8 to 10 feet compared to what is depicted*

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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Here is the existing view on Joralemon Street.

## Existing Condition | View on Joralemon Street





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

We can screen some of the traffic on the Staten Island bound lanes with both a linear frame...

## Linear Frame Option | View on Joralemon Street



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38



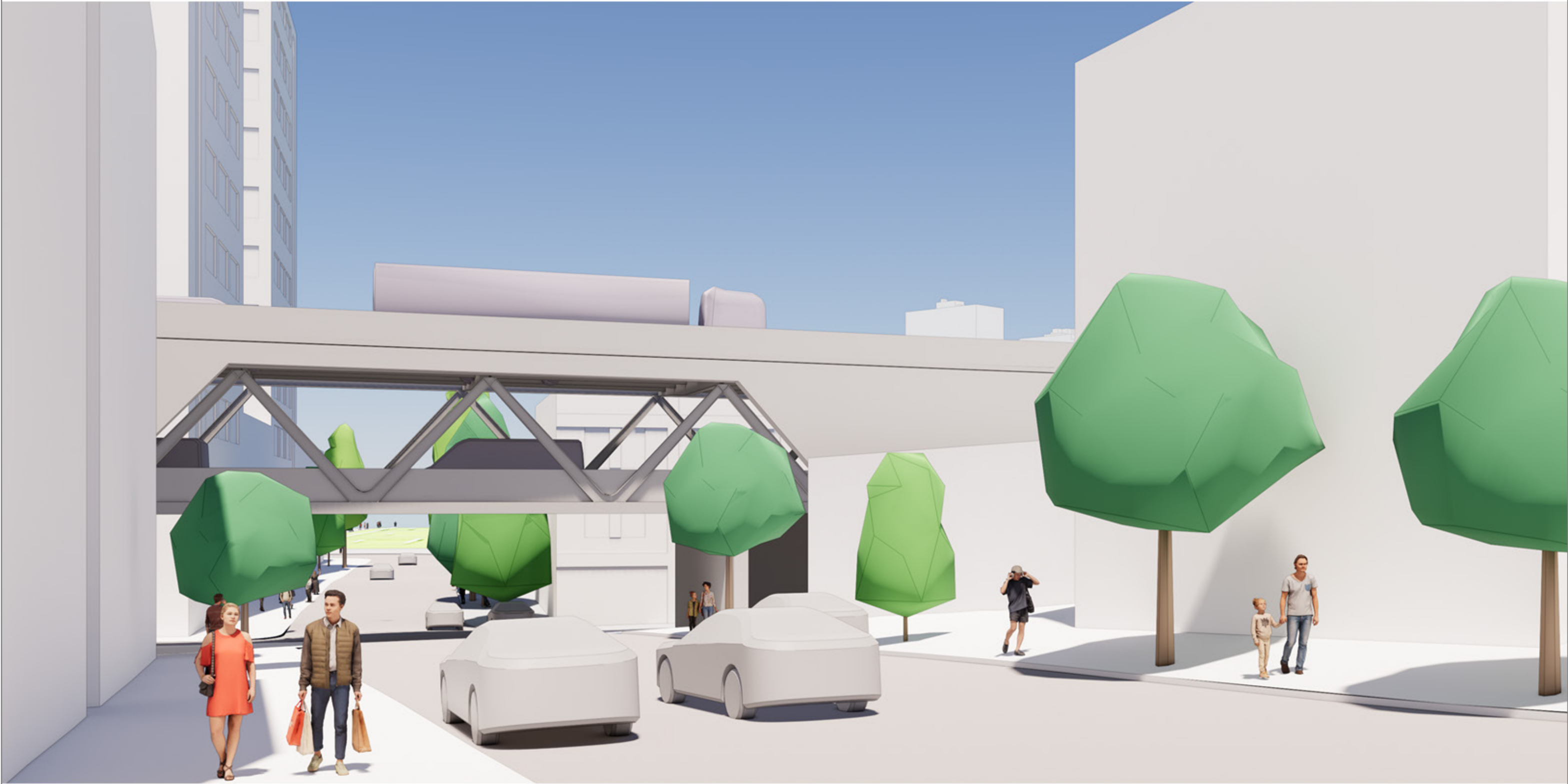
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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

...and a triangular frame.

**Triangle Frame Option |** View on Joralemon Street



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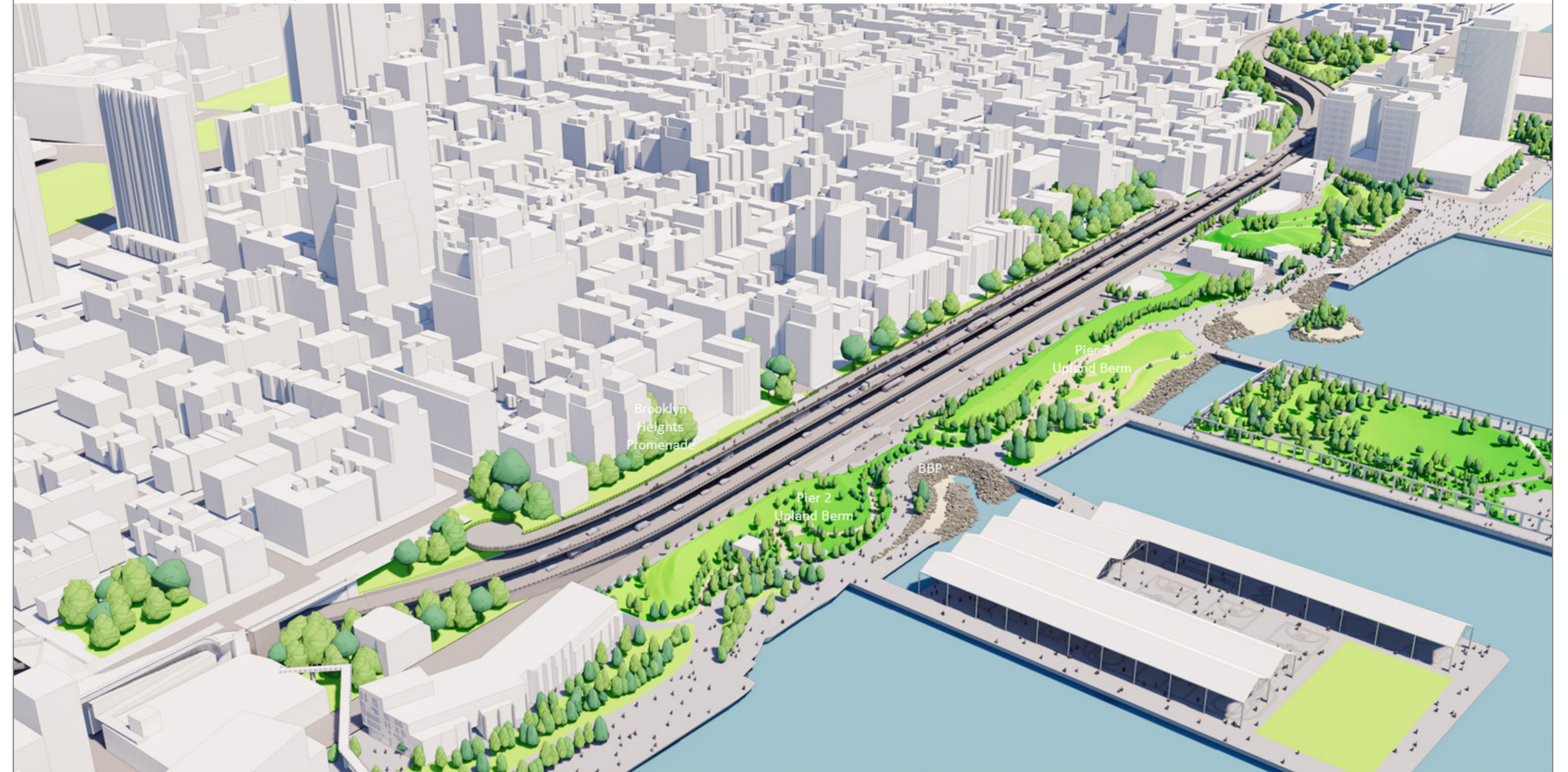




# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Finally, in the aerial view, you can see the way this design moves the Staten Island bound lanes further east.

## Existing Condition | Aerial View



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40



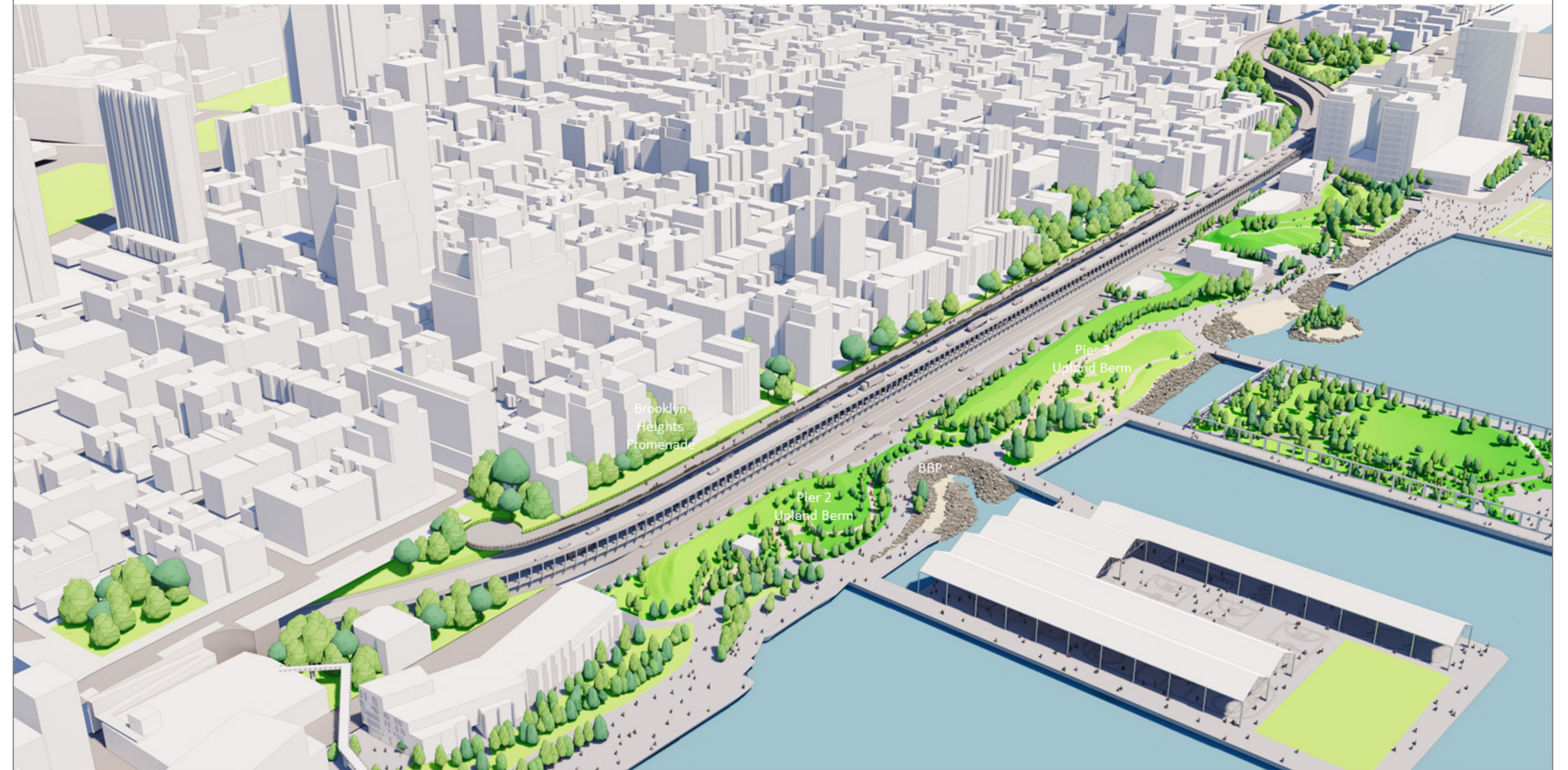
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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

This creates the most minimal structure in both a linear frame design...

## Linear Frame Option | Aerial View



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41



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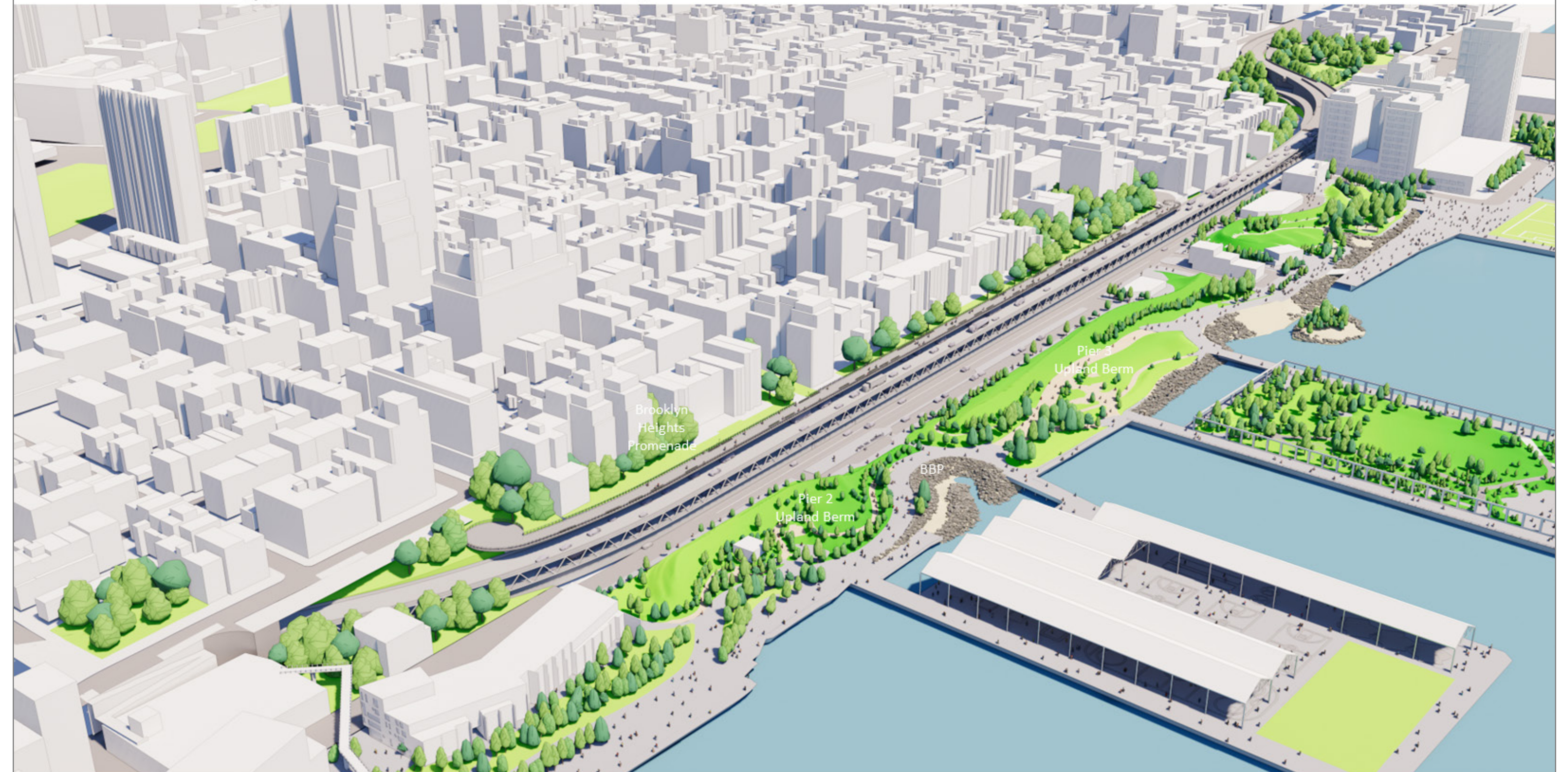


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

...and triangle frame.

Please note that this concept is the first part of the design process, focused on the actual bridge construction. NYC DOT is focusing on getting this part right before returning to pedestrian and bike connections.

## Triangle Frame Option | Aerial View



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42



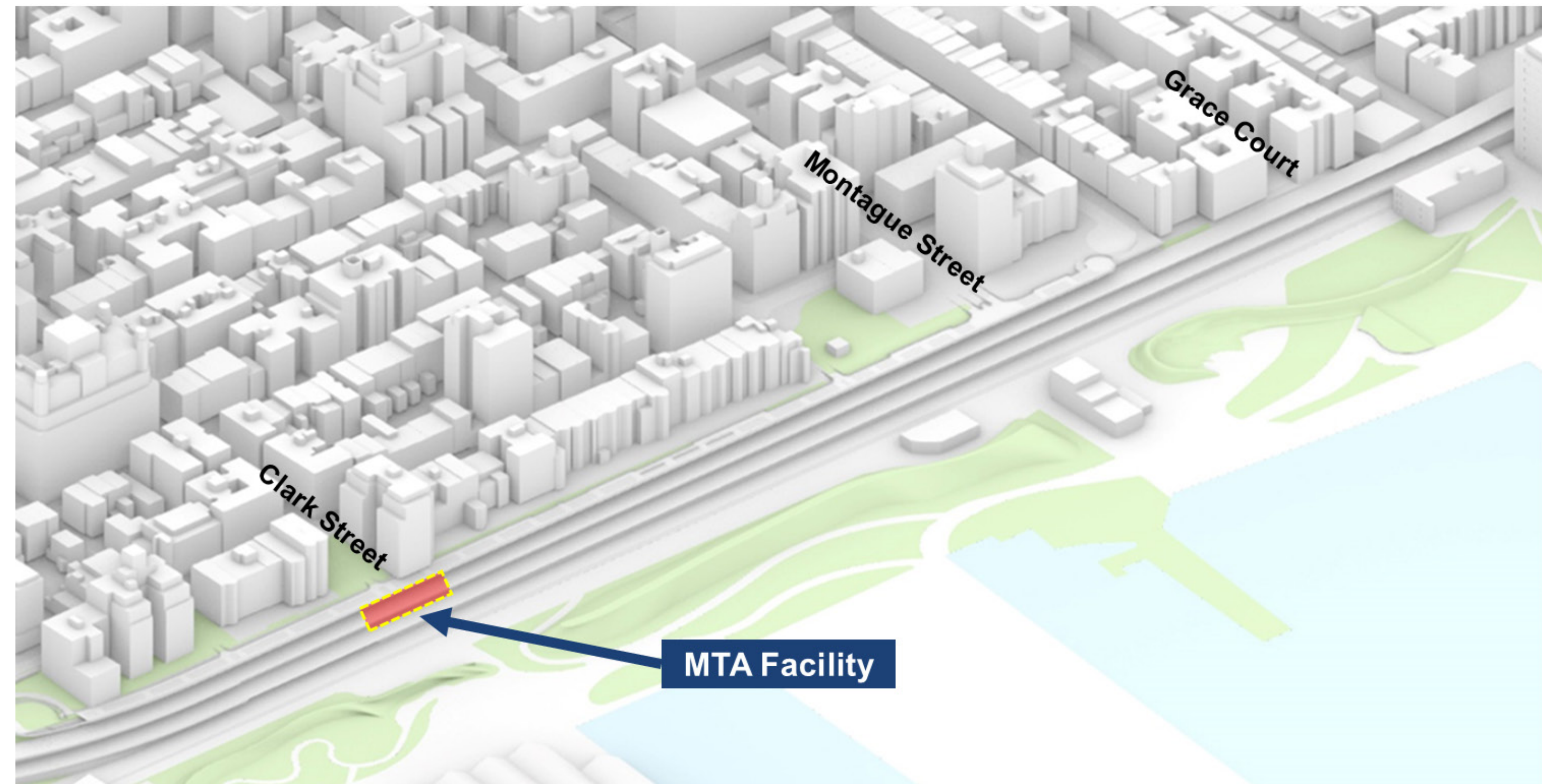
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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

These concepts require a further discussion of the MTA facilities mentioned on the considerations slide, particularly the fan plant at Clark Street, which is shown in red.

## Current Location of MTA Facility



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43



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

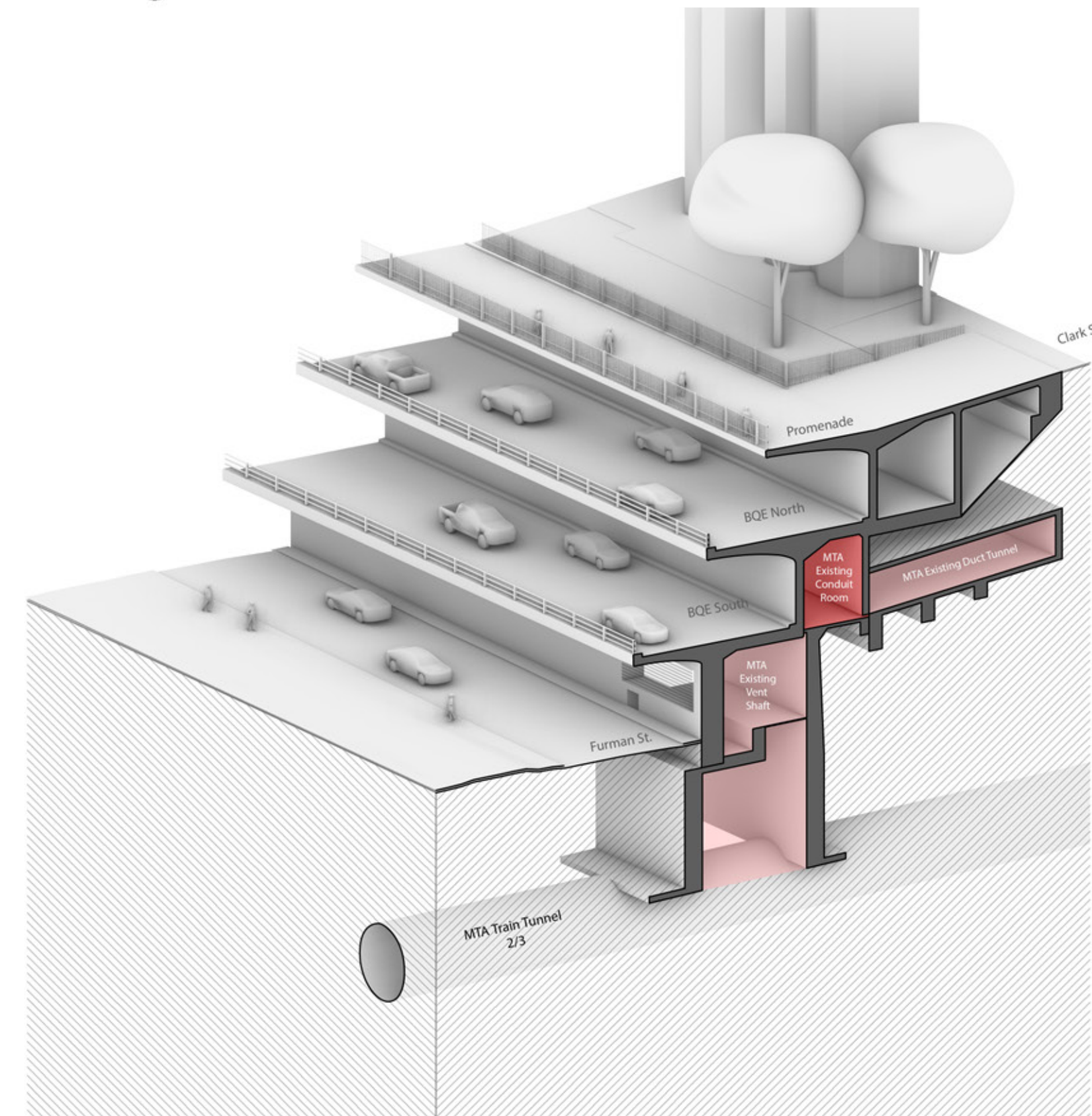
As mentioned earlier, prior versions of this design took into consideration MTA facilities, but NYC DOT has continued to evaluate the Clark Street Fan Plant, which is partly integrated into the BQE structure.

We have now taken a fresh look at possibilities for the structure on the East of Furman, but this would require that a small portion of this facility be relocated.

This diagram shows the existing conduit room in the MTA facility in dark red. Inside the conduit room are extensive cables that bring power to the third rail of the subway lines underneath the structure, such as the 2 and 3 lines. Some of the conduits also provide mission-critical controls for the safe operation of the subway.

As you can see, the location of the conduit room currently precludes the Staten Island bound lane from being moved closer to the BQE structure.

## MTA Conduit Facility Existing Condition



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44



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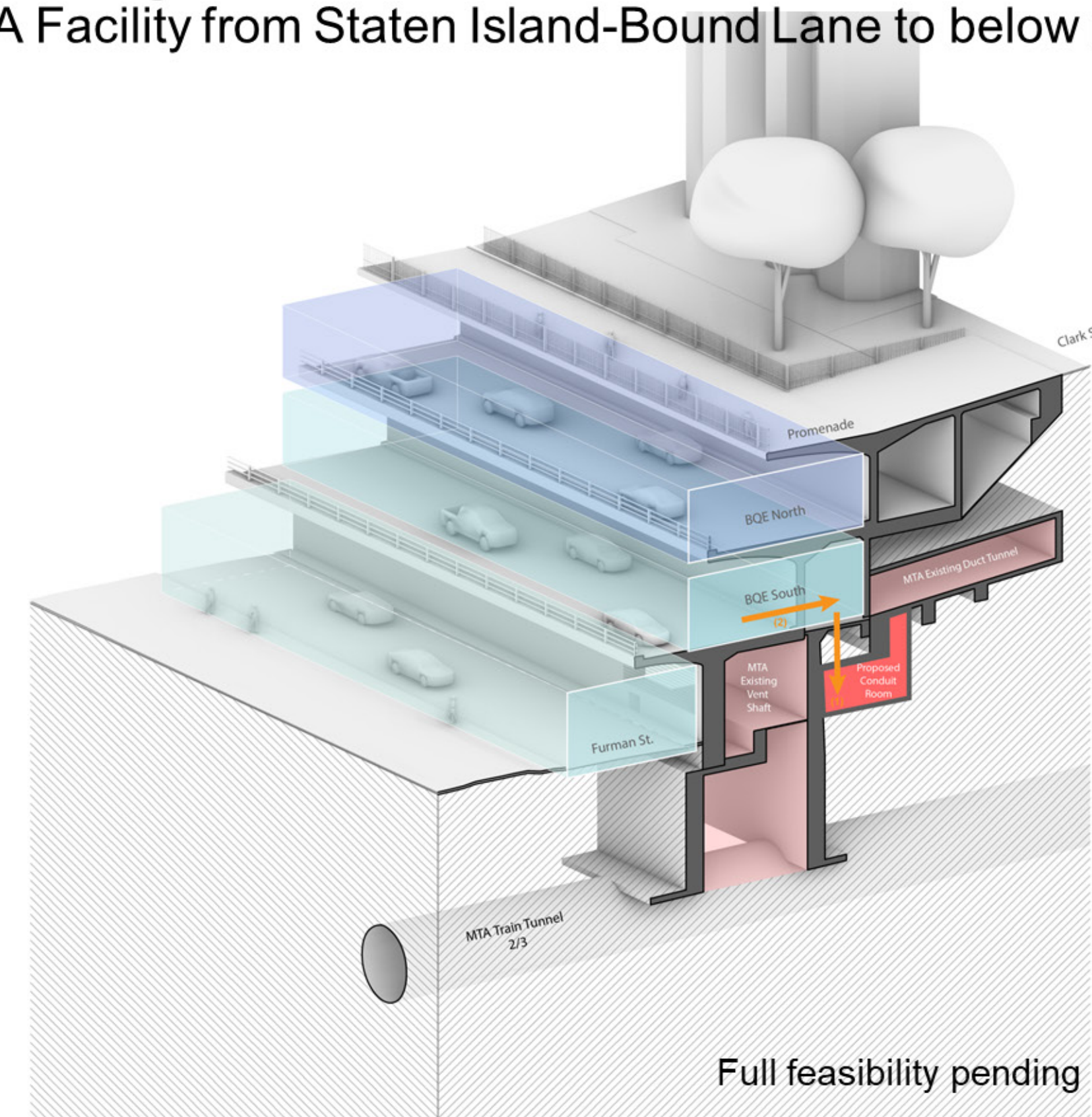
# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Following the orange arrows, you can see that if we are able to move this facility below the roadway, it opens up the possibility for the Staten Island bound lanes to be pushed further to the east, closer to the Brooklyn Heights retaining wall.

The light blue boxes – Furman Street and the Staten Island-bound lane – highlight the changes that would occur.

## MTA Conduit Facility

Relocation of MTA Facility from Staten Island-Bound Lane to below roadway



Full feasibility pending further study with MTA



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45



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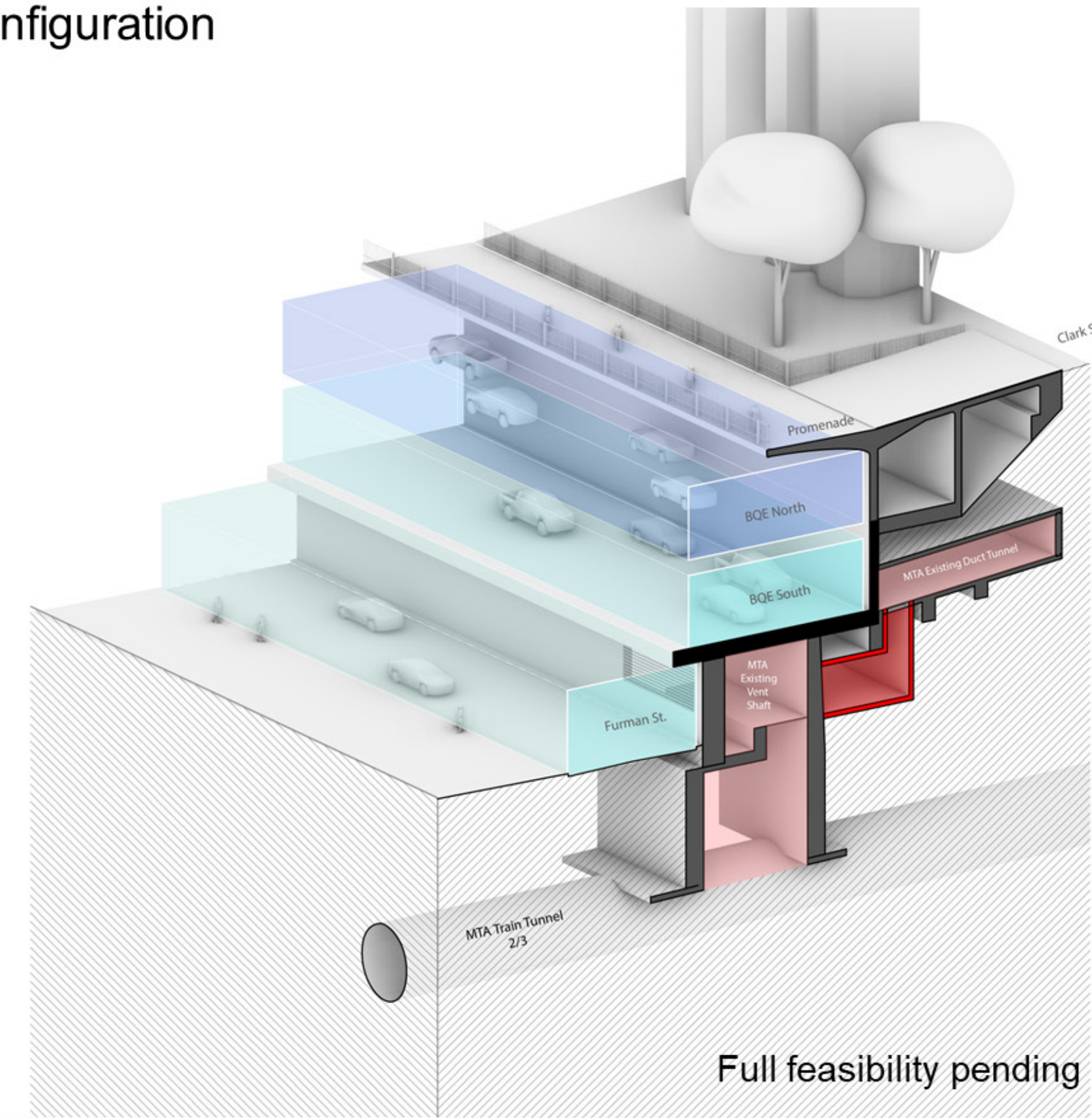


# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

This move would allow us to “stack” the two travel lanes and produce the slimmest structure possible.

We have been in active conversations with the MTA and we are collaborating with them to refine a plan for this approach.

## MTA Conduit Facility Final “stacked” configuration



Full feasibility pending further study with MTA



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46



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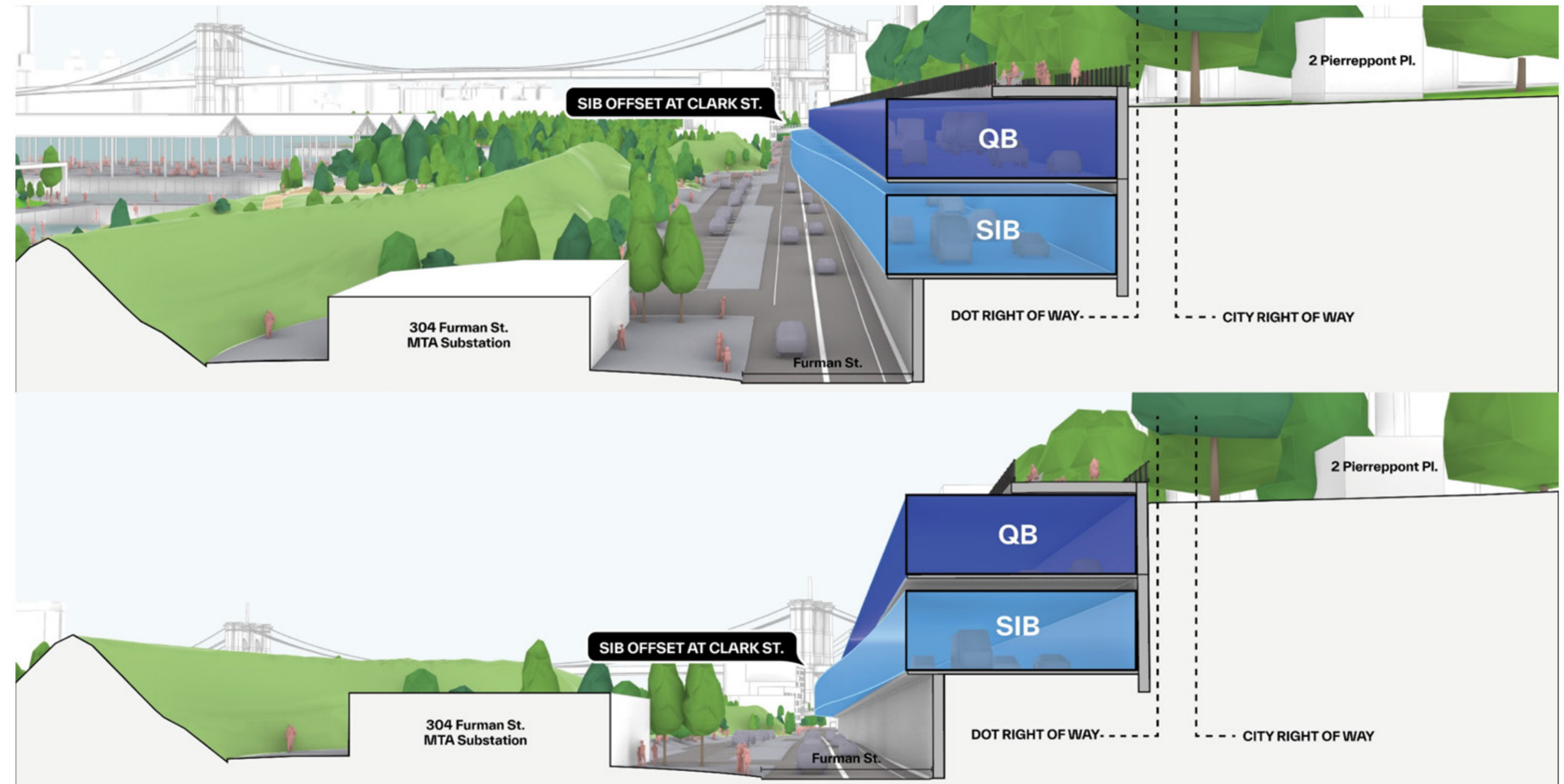
# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

It's important to stress that moving the MTA infrastructure is a complex endeavor and while we are pursuing this, we are also studying how this concept would look if we need to run the alignment around the MTA infrastructure.

In the interest of transparency, this is an early rendering of a potential alignment if we cannot move the MTA infrastructure.

NYC DOT's engineers continue to refine the Staten Island roadway alignment to minimize the visual impact of a bump out – should it be necessary – while also providing safe transitions for drivers on the highway around the MTA infrastructure.

## Clark St Bump Out Concept



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47



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT has been quite busy since the Winter 2023 workshops and this section provides some updates.

## Project Updates & Environmental Review Process

# 4

48





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

First, community engagement is critical in this work. In the Manhattan Bridge Interchange area, we further designed and engineered three approaches to address safety and connectivity for all users in this area.

As mentioned earlier, we'll continue engagement on the two preferred concepts into the fall of 2024.

NYC DOT has an open door policy and will have continued ongoing small group and 1:1 conversations with stakeholders throughout BQE Central.

Second, our engineers and contractors have been hard at work maintaining the integrity of the existing structure, to keep this important regional connector in good condition for the approximately 130,000 daily users.

Third, as we plan for the future of the corridor, the team has been hard at work preparing analyses for the forthcoming Environmental Review.

## BQE Central

Since we met in June 2023:

### Community Engagement

- Manhattan Bridge Interchange
- Zones 1-5: ongoing small group and 1:1 conversations

### Maintaining the Roadway

- Interim Repairs
- WIM Installation

### Pre-Environmental Review Activities

- Structural Health Assessments and Geometric Study
- Environmental Review Documents
- Traffic Study



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49



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Two updates on maintaining the roadway --

**Interim Repairs:** When DOT recognized the need for interim repairs at Clark Street and Grace Court, we mobilized a team to conduct interim repairs. This work is now substantially complete. DOT will continue to monitor the structure closely and respond to any additional conditions that may emerge.

**WIM:** As the triple cantilever structure ages, we have embarked on data collection & enforcement efforts that will provide for continued lifespan of the structure.

The BQE is a critical connector for our regional freight network, which has grown notably since the BQE opened in the 1950s. Currently, the NYS legal load is significantly higher than what the structure was designed for, and overweight trucks put greater stress on the structure.

Our first-in-nation system weighs vehicles as they drive by while maintaining their speed. Drivers above the legal limit are issued violations, after a series of unique checks.

The program is active on the Queensbound roadway and will be installed on the Staten Island bound roadway in late 2024.

NYC DOT started issuing violations to trucks exceeding legal limits in November 2023 and the program has been a success. The number of overweight trucks has decreased by nearly 50% in BQE Central.



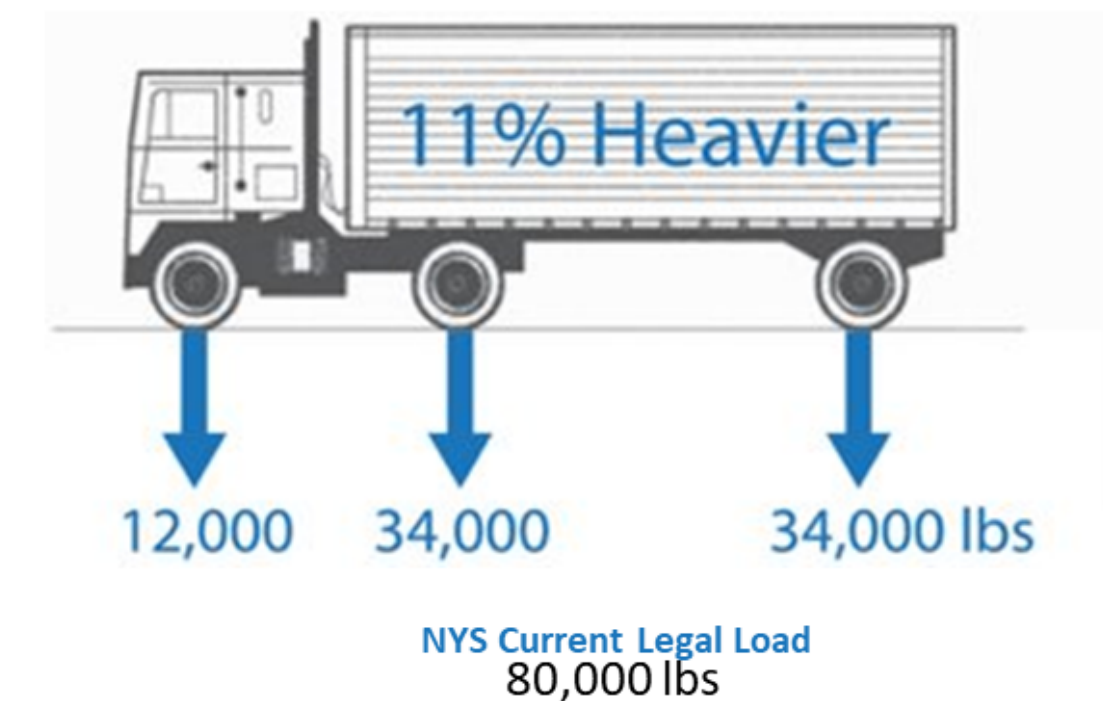
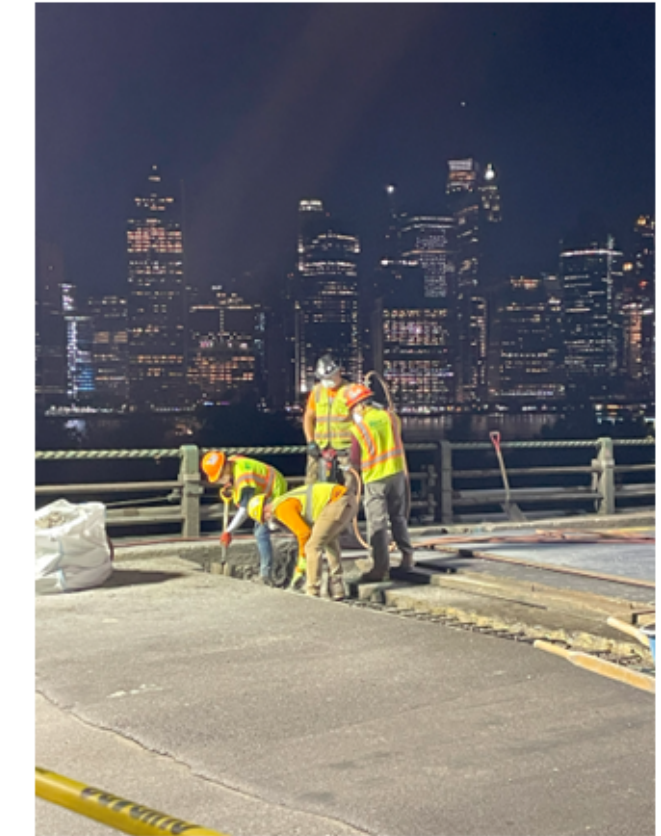
## BQE Central | Maintaining the Roadway

### Interim Repairs

- Work completed with nighttime lane closures and three complete weekend shutdowns (July 2023 – June 2024)
- Thank you for your partnership!

### Weigh In Motion (WIM):

- Overweight trucks cause higher stress than smaller vehicles and may create greater vibrations.
- NYCDOT has implemented the first-in-nation direct enforcement program of weight limits using a WIM system.
- The program is active on the Queensbound roadway and **will be installed on the Staten Island bound roadway this year.**



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50



# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Over the past two years, NYC DOT has led significant engagement for the BQE North and South corridors, through 11 community workshops.

The engagement included deep work by 16 Community Partner Organizations throughout Brooklyn, who led over 400 grassroots engagements.

NYC DOT will be releasing a report in summer 2024 that documents engagement outcomes and proposed concepts. During the remainder of 2024, NYC DOT will begin to advance projects through typical agency work.

NYC DOT is also beginning work in partnership with NYS DOT on a \$5.6M Reconnecting Communities grant to progress at least one concept developed through the visioning in both BQE North and BQE South.

The funding is best suited for concepts such as capping, pedestrian bridges, and other capital buildouts.

NYC DOT, NYSDOT and FHWA will continue to conduct community engagement through this process.

## BQE North and South

Since we met in June 2023:

### BQE North and South Visioning

- This Summer: Report will document engagement outcomes with proposed concepts.
- NYC DOT will begin to advance projects this year.

### \$5.6M Reconnecting Communities Grant, in partnership with NYSDOT

- The agencies will progress at least one concept in both BQE North and BQE South.
- There will be continued community engagement throughout this process.



Bay Ridge Community Development Center



Round 3 Workshop



Brooklyn Chinese-American Association



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51





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

More about the upcoming environmental review process for this section of the BQE in Brooklyn:

The National Environmental Protection Act – called “NEPA” – is a federal law that requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their policies and programs on the built and natural environment through an environmental review.

NEPA:

- Directed federal agencies to consider the environmental effects of their decisions;
- Established a process for agencies to document the environmental effects of their decisions; and
- Established a Council on Environmental Quality under the Office of the President to “coordinate the federal government’s efforts to improve, preserve, and protect America’s public health and environment.”

The NEPA process must include a comprehensive review of the social, economic, and environmental effects of an action.

NEPA is a disclosure process. This means that decisions must be fully documented, and the lead agencies – in this case FHWA, NYSDOT, and NYC DOT – must consider the full record in making its selection of a Preferred Alternative (or concept) for a project.

## What is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?



Sets forth a national policy to create and maintain harmony between the human and natural environment



Requires federal agencies to evaluate the potential impacts of the projects, programs, and activities on the environment



Establishes a Council on Environmental Quality to oversee the process (part of Executive Branch)



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52



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

For BQE Central there are three lead agencies – those most responsible for the project. They are the Federal Highway Administration, the New York State Department of Transportation, and New York City DOT.

NYC DOT is the project sponsor, we will seek federal funding and approvals, and will build the project.

Other agencies will be involved in reviews and approvals including the US Environmental Protection Agency, MTA, and the NYC Department of City Planning. These agencies are known as Cooperating or Participating Agencies.

## Three Co-Leads for Environmental Review

For BQE Central, there are three lead agencies: those most responsible for the project.



NYCDOT is also the project sponsor – the entity seeking federal funding/approvals and building the project.

Other agencies will be involved in reviews and approvals, such as:

- *Cooperating Agencies:* US Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; State Historic Preservation Office
- *Participating Agencies:* MTA, NYC Department of Environmental Protection, NYC Parks, and NYC Department of City Planning



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53



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT is committed to advancing the project in a timely manner. As we move forward into the environmental review process, we have been hard at work preparing necessary documentation. This includes assessing structural health, conducting traffic studies, and preparing the needed environmental documents.

First, to be ready to enter environmental review, we are preparing documents and analyses for the future environmental review process.

For this project, we expect to complete an Environmental Impact Statement (or EIS) to meet NEPA requirements. An EIS is the most robust level of documentation under NEPA.

The documentation aims to objectively outline the impacts of a project on the built and natural environment, including the evaluation of a range of reasonable alternatives that can be implemented for a project.

Once environmental review begins, we enter a two-year time clock for completion of EIS. During this time, there will be several opportunities for the public to review and comment on the EIS.

## BQE Central | Pre-Environmental Review Activities

In preparation to enter the Environmental Review process, NYC DOT has been:



**Preparing  
Environmental Documents**



**Assessing  
Structural Health**



**Conducting  
Traffic Studies**



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54



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT is also assessing structural health.

To maintain the health and integrity of the roadway, we periodically update a material service life analysis to estimate the remaining useful life of the structure. This includes evaluating and assessing the condition of the concrete deck and retaining walls through a concrete coring program.

We also monitor vibrations along the corridor and conduct quarterly inspections of the bridges, including the walls, barrier, curb, and roadway at BQE Queensbound, BQE Staten Island Bound and Furman Street.

## Conducting Structural Health Assessments



To prepare for environmental review, the City is completing detailed assessments of each of the 21 bridges that comprise BQE Central. We also conduct:

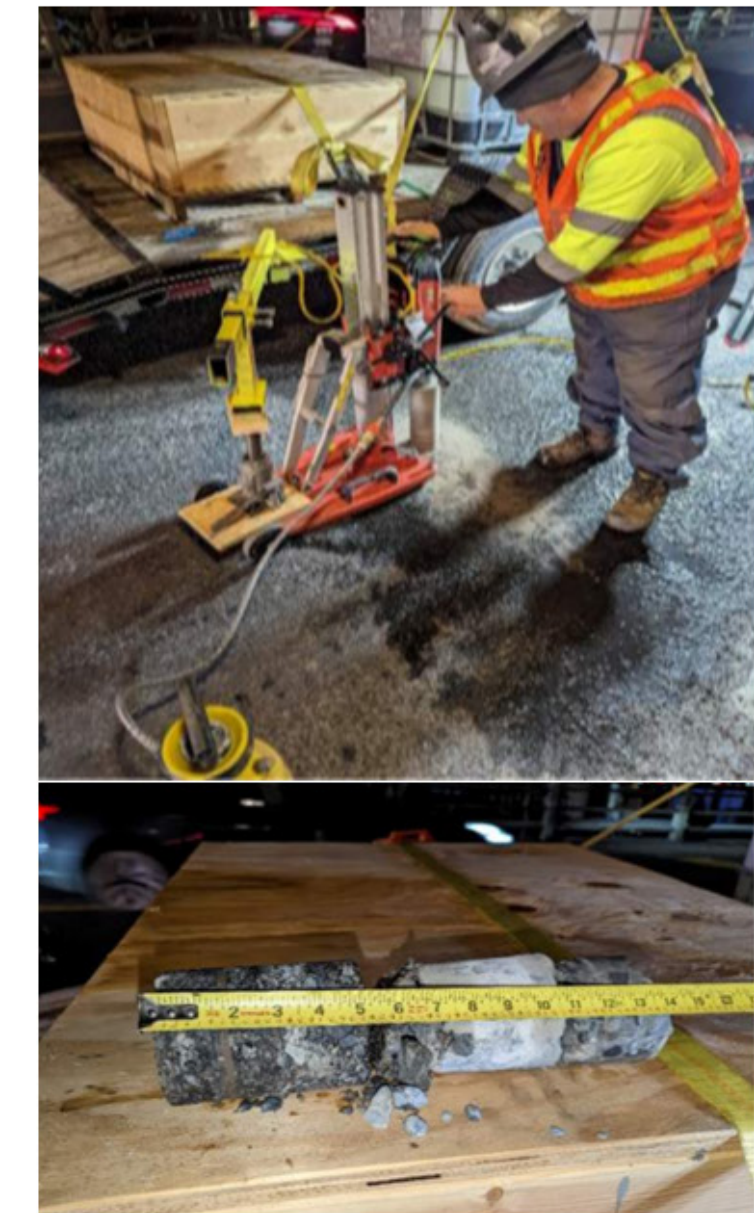
### Vibration Monitoring



### Visual Inspections



### Concrete Coring



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55





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT is studying traffic to understand how the BQE would operate now and in the future with both a 2-lane and 3-lane scenario.

We are running a total of 99 models – data-based calculations that simulate how traffic will behave at a local and regional scale, now and in the future – including cars, trucks, buses, pedestrians & bicyclists.

This will be done for both existing and future years, with modeling performed for the peak traffic hours in the morning, midday, and in the afternoon.

We will also conduct a Safety Analysis for Local Streets and intersections and the BQE mainline.

Congestion pricing has effects in our traffic models for BQE Central. Once the MTA approved Congestion Pricing in December 2023, we obtained the data related to traffic and included it in our models. The delayed approval of Congestion Pricing resulted in a delay in beginning our models for more than 6 months, which impacted our overall schedule.

With the recent announcement of an indefinite pause in Congestion Pricing, we need to re-evaluate the best approach to our traffic models. We are discussing with our State and Federal government partners how to best account for the indefinite pause on congestion pricing in the models.

## Modeling Both 2 and 3 Lane Configurations



NYC DOT is running **99 models** to understand study area traffic:

- Studying 2 lane & 3 lane configurations
- Regional & local traffic models including cars, trucks, buses, pedestrians & bicyclists
- Traffic in both existing and future years, with modeling performed for weekday AM, Midday, and PM peak hours
- Safety Analysis for Local Intersections/Streets and for BQE mainline and ramps
- Recent delay of congestion pricing will need to be considered



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56





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

NYC DOT expects to begin environmental review in Spring 2025. This process begins when the Notice of Intent (NOI) is published.

However, there is public engagement to be done before the Notice of Intent. We will start this outreach in Fall 2024.

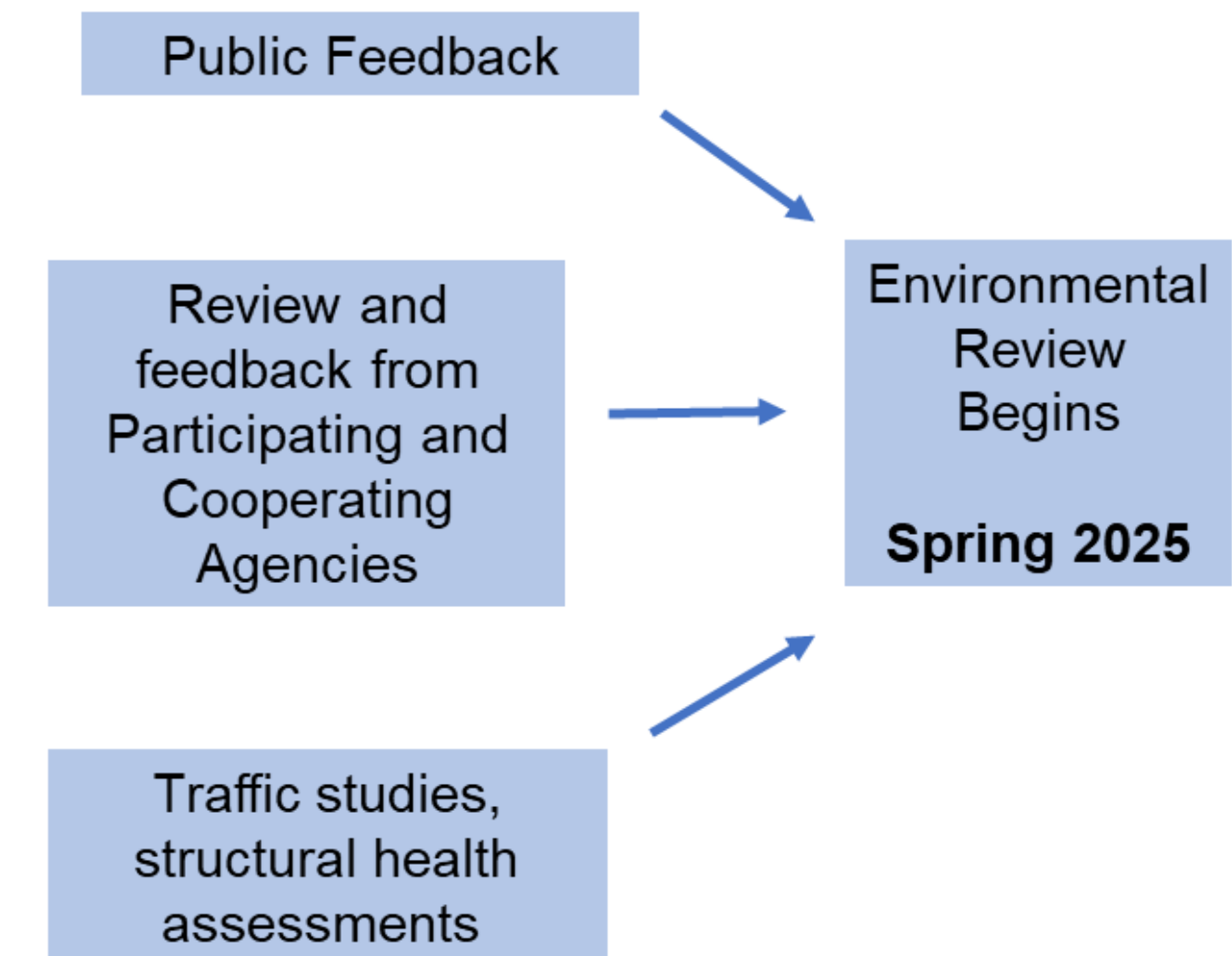
During this pre- environmental review phase, NYC DOT, NYSDOT, and FHWA will co-host public meetings.

We will introduce the project's scope, schedule, and purpose and need; and we will share preliminary traffic modeling results and a preliminary range of design concepts.

Since we are moving into this joint effort with our state and federal partners, the workshops conducted on June 20th and June 24th 2024 will close out the City's visioning process, although NYC DOT will always welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss the project with stakeholders.

## Preparing for Environmental Review

- We expect the BQE Environmental Review to begin in **Spring 2025**.
- NYC DOT, NYSDOT, and FHWA will co-host a pre- environmental review process, with public meetings beginning in **Fall 2024**.
- Public meetings prior to environmental review will capture feedback to be recorded and used to inform the final NOI Submission. The meetings will:
  - Introduce the project, project limits, project schedule, and purpose and need
  - Share preliminary traffic model results and preliminary range of design concepts
- We will also begin the review and feedback process with Participating Agencies and Cooperating Agencies this year.



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57



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

This is the current project schedule. NYC DOT is presenting a conservative schedule and will strive to cut time where possible.

As mentioned, we will begin environmental review in Spring 2025.

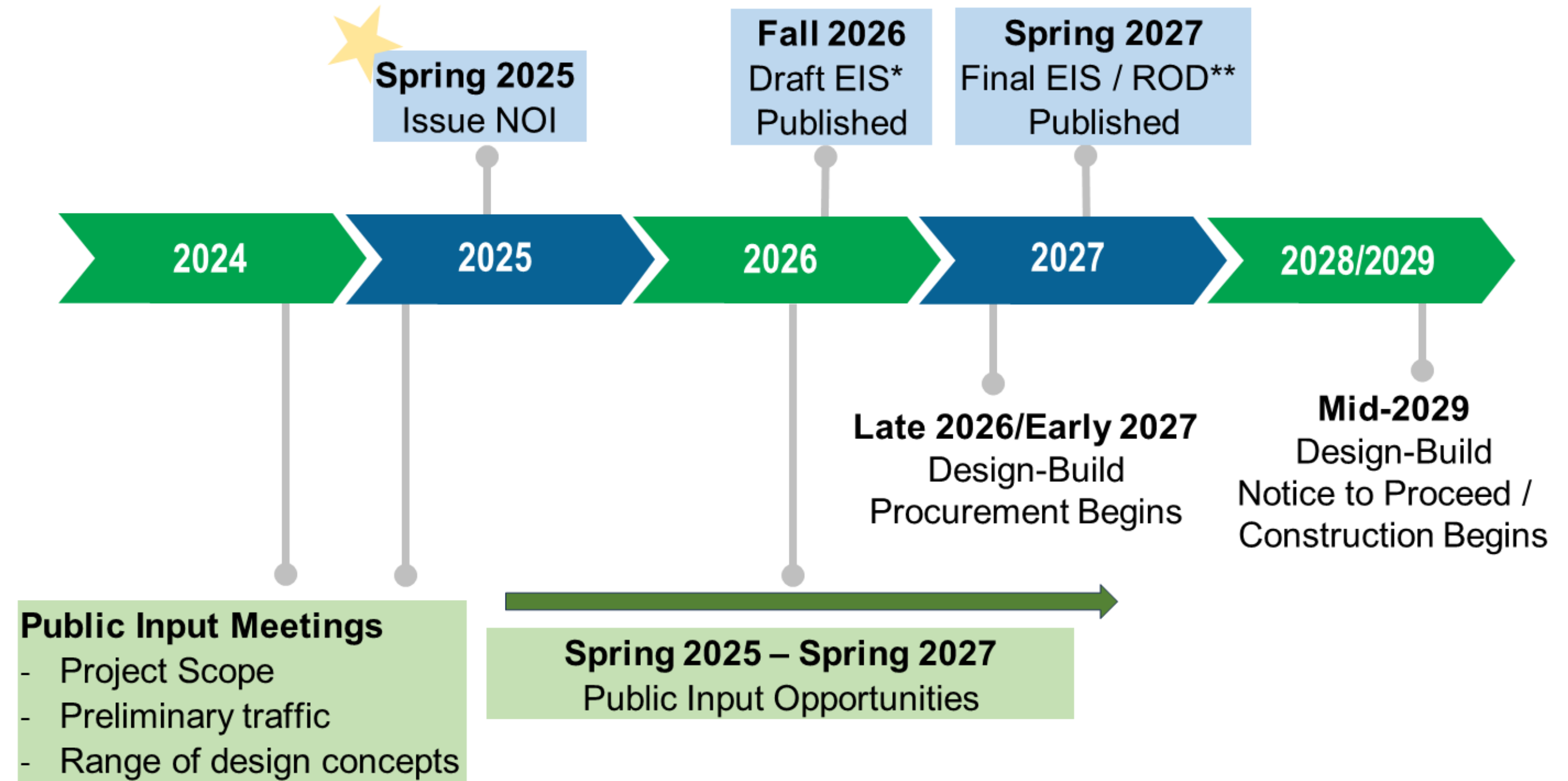
Until then, we are working closely with NY State DOT & FHWA to prepare required information and studies, which we will also share with the public in the pre-environmental review meetings.

We are scheduled to publish the Draft EIS outlining our project under environmental review in Fall of 2025, and enter a public comment period before preparation of the final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision in Fall 2027. There will be opportunities for public engagement throughout.

On this schedule, we anticipate seeking bidders for design-build by early 2027, and giving the successful bidder a notice to proceed with work in mid-2029.

That means we expect Construction activities will begin in mid-2029.

## Targeting a Spring 2025 Environmental Review Start



\*EIS: Environmental Impact Statement  
\*\*ROD: Record of Decision



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58





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

Q & A Panel

5

59





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

## Q & A Panel



**Julie Bero**  
Chief Strategy Officer,  
New York City  
Department of Transportation



**Michael Stein**  
Partner,  
SBP



**David Vega-Barachowitz**  
Associate Principal  
Director of Urban Design,  
WXY



**Christopher Calvert**  
Senior Vice President,  
AKRF



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60



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## Breakout Discussions

6

61





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

## Breakout Discussions

In a few moments, you will automatically be placed in one of the breakout rooms.

We'd like to hear about:

- Thoughts on the design concept shown tonight
- Input on the connections between the neighborhood and Brooklyn Bridge Park, and how the design can facilitate connections.
- Questions about the project



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62



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# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

## Breakout Group Share-Out

63





# BQE Central Workshop - June 2024

**Thank you!**

64

