



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

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Brooklyn Borough President

**City Council Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
Hearing on the FY24 Preliminary Budget  
March 9, 2023**

Thank you, Chair Brooks-Powers and members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for holding this hearing today.

As Brooklyn Borough President, I have many transportation priorities for our great borough, all of which are aimed at ending car culture and encouraging people who are able to walk, bike, and take public transportation. To that end, I want to echo what you will no doubt hear from many advocates today – that I would like to see more safety improvements happen faster. Council Member Restler and I are working on a legislative proposal, Intro 417, to help facilitate this, and I thank you for calendaring that hearing next month.

Along with policy changes, we need a robust financial commitment to implementation of the Streets Plan, to fixing dangerous intersections, and to promoting Vision Zero. I am also going to continue advocating for implementation of congestion pricing, for regulating last-mile delivery facilities, and for increased funding to support a full build-out of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway, expansion of Summer Streets to the outer boroughs, and safe routes to schools.

But what I really want to discuss today is the future of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway. The dire need to address current conditions presents us with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to undo the racist legacy of Robert Moses and deliver for environmental justice communities. This roadway not only split communities of color in North and South Brooklyn, but also subjected these working-class neighborhoods to decades of toxic pollution, poisoning generations of residents. Yet this administration insists on pushing a temporary fix that ignores community needs along the corridor. I am extremely disappointed by the lack of vision, and by the State's unwillingness to participate in good faith.

From Greenpoint to Brooklyn Heights to Bay Ridge, we are unified that there needs to be a full redesign of the BQE corridor that centers racial justice, equity, and climate mitigation, and that it needs to happen now. From a budget perspective, this means DOT must continue to work to secure funds from the Federal government through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and that the State must come to the table with supplementary funding and a willingness to participate.

Though I acknowledge the urgency with which we must address the state of the triple cantilever, I appreciate DOT's efforts to study maintaining two lanes in each direction, rather than reverting to

a six-lane highway. As they say, if you build it, they will come – more lanes means more cars and trucks every year, the opposite of what we want for a climate resilient future. I know the BQE is a critical truck route, but planning for fewer, cleaner trucks on our roads isn't magic. It's regulating last-mile facilities, and funding implementation of DOT's existing priorities outlined in the 2021 Delivering New York Smart Truck Management Plan.

As we consider a long-term vision, we also need immediate implementation of the truck weight enforcement system that was supposed to be completed last year, to ensure safety now. If this is a staffing issue, I am happy to work with the Council to see it addressed quickly.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I look forward to working with the Council on this effort. Together, we can transform the BQE corridor. This is our chance to deliver justice, and as I've said before, justice isn't free.