

Tanvi Pandya, Executive Director, BQE, Design Build and Emergency Contracts
NYCDOT Bridges Division
Julie Bero, Chief Strategy Officer, DOT

Dear Tanvi & Julie,

The Atlantic Avenue Business Improvement District (AABID) understands that DOT is re-assessing the Atlantic Avenue interchange design that was presented to the public in June 2023. AABID is dedicated to improving public space within our district, and this especially includes our streets. Successful street design ensures that our corridor is active, accessible, attractive, and feels safe. Prioritizing these attributes secures Atlantic Avenue as an economically vibrant destination for residents and visitors.

AABID has worked to improve conditions at the interchange for years. In 2013, we embarked on the Atlantic Avenue Gateway Project to transform the Atlantic Avenue BQE underpass into a safer pedestrian connection between Atlantic Avenue and the Brooklyn Bridge Park. As a part of this project, we completed two murals (now destroyed), and addressed pigeon debris eradication. Planned lighting upgrades, wayfinding signage, pedestrian circulation upgrades, and plantings were not completed, but were a part of the plan.

With these previous improvement endeavors in mind, we once again ask DOT to remove the Atlantic Avenue Queens-Bound on ramp, a recommendation cited in the 2020 BQE Expert Panel Report, and expand Adam Yauch Park to create an uninterrupted sidewalk from Hicks Street to Furman Street. The AABID understands that this will require achieving consensus among other stakeholder groups. As a member of the BQET, there is much support for this ramp closure, but not at the cost of building a larger on-ramp elsewhere in the vicinity.

The AABID views closing the Atlantic Avenue Queens-Bound on ramp as a starting point in finding a holistic solution that will balance the many functions of the interchange. This area is more than on and off ramps for cars and freight, it also serves pedestrians and public transit. The local benefits in closing the ramp will be immediate, as this is a high crash location. It also feeds heavy traffic volumes to Atlantic Avenue and our local streets, and significantly increases traffic volume and physical weight to the triple cantilever.

This is an opportunity for transformative improvements for our district. Atlantic Avenue should not be the only east/west truck route in Brooklyn. Our vision is to create a unified boulevard from the BQE interchange to Fourth Avenue, and finally address the traffic problems that plague Atlantic Avenue and the surrounding residential streets. These problems include pedestrian death and injury by vehicles, severe, recurring congestion, heavy cross-street traffic, illegal parking by municipal workers, and air and noise pollution.

We would like the opportunity to meet with you and suggest a small, dedicated meeting with the Atlantic Avenue stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Kelly Carroll
Executive Director

cc: Keith Bray, Commissioner, DOT
CM Lincoln Restler, District 33
CM Shahana Hanif, District
Assemblymember Jo Ann Simon
NYS Senator Andrew Gounardes
Taya Mueller, Brooklyn Community Board 2
Lara Birnback, Brooklyn Heights Association
Linda DeRosa, Willowtown Association
Amy Breedlove, Cobble Hill Association
Amanda Sue Nichols, Cobble Hill Association