

SUMMARY: A proposal to augment and improve DOT's presented School Safety Improvements Plan for the environs of Kingston and Brooklyn Avenues to mitigate the effects on quality of life and emergency access.

Brooklyn Community Board 9 **DISAPPROVES** the School Safety Improvements Plan as presented in June 2024, but expects that a revised plan can have positive effects on the community without its current drawbacks.

This resolution incorporates community feedback to maintain adequate road widths for passing and for emergency vehicles, to prevent traffic travel lanes from getting too narrow, to provide larger safe zones so pedestrians don't get hit by bicycles when exiting vehicles, and to preserve well-used parking space in the district.

Brooklyn Community Board 9 adopts the following resolution:

WHEREAS

1. Brooklyn Community District 9 contains diverse neighborhoods connected by our shared values for family safety and active street life; recognizing that residents and visitors to Prospect Park, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and other esteemed public spaces have a right to safety, accessibility, and ease of access. Improved and sustained connections to our prized local features will increase the quality of life experienced by both residents and visitors;
2. Many residents of Community District 9 use a mixture of transportation methods, including cars, rideshares, taxis, bicycles, and public transportation from buses and trains to CitiBikes;
3. There are limited bicycle lanes and paths in the district; and though well used, current lanes are only vehicle-protected or grade-separated along less than 4% of district streets, and non-protected lanes are frequently blocked by parked drivers, delivery vehicles, or other opportunistic traffic;
4. Protected bike lanes reduce risk to cyclists by up to 60% and have been shown to double ridership along the highest-risk streets; along the corridor, there have been 439 traffic collisions in the last decade resulting in 610 serious injuries, and the proposed street limits are proximate to multiple DOT priority corridors;
5. Street designs that include protected bike lanes have been proven to increase safety for all users, showing a 15% drop in all crashes with injuries and a 21% drop in pedestrian injuries;
6. Many vehicles illegally speed on the wider streets in the district, with 95% of drivers over the speed limit on Kingston Avenue between Rutland and Winthrop, 80% of drivers over the speed limit on Brooklyn Avenue between Lefferts and East New York Avenues, and 70% of drivers over the speed limit on Kingston Avenue between Maple and Midwood Streets;
7. Slightly narrowing streets has been proven to assist drivers with reducing their speed as well as discouraging speeding;
8. Many residents are concerned about the effect that protected bike lanes will have on emergency vehicle access throughout the district;

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9. Improving safety should ideally account for realistic road usage and allow residents to move in free and practical ways and retain the way of life that residents in Community District 9 enjoy;
10. Some residents are concerned about existing street-crossing habits causing harm between pedestrians and cyclists when pedestrians interact with newly-installed curbside bike lanes upon beginning to cross a street;
11. Some residents are concerned about cyclists on curbside bike lanes posing a potential danger to pedestrians and young children exiting parked vehicles interacting with a bike lane between their parking location and the sidewalk;
12. Residents are concerned about the potential loss of around 54 parking spots, most of which would be lost because of daylighting, which improves safety but may not be necessary in every area DOT presents it in.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Brooklyn Community Board 9 strongly urges DOT to implement the following changes to the School Safety Improvements Plan on currently installed and planned installations of infrastructure in Brooklyn Community District 9:

1. On the segments of Brooklyn and Kingston Avenues:
 - a. Remove the parking-protected (Class I) bike lane on Brooklyn and Kingston Avenues between Empire Boulevard and Lefferts Avenue and instead **utilize a conventional** (Class II) bike lane made solely with paint, which would not alter the location of the curbside parking lane.
 - b. As an alternative to item 1a, omit the bike lane entirely on Brooklyn and Kingston Avenues between Empire Boulevard and Lefferts Avenue and instead, simply stripe a wider curbside parking lane without any bicycle notation, matching what currently exists on Kingston Avenue between Empire Boulevard and Eastern Parkway;
2. In protected bike lanes, implement following measures:
 - a. **Increasing the width of buffered areas between the protected bike lane** and parked vehicles by 1-2 feet while reducing the width of the bike lanes, in order to increase the size of the pedestrian safe area without reducing travel lane or parking lane size;
 - b. Tactile rumble strips, armadillos, crossing lights, or other warning methodology (at the discretion of DOT) to control cyclist bike speeds and pedestrian alertness around schools, parks, school loading areas or spaces with heavy pedestrian traffic;
3. Re-evaluate the anticipated vehicle parking loss of 54 parking spots and:
 - a. Minimize the disruption to existing conditions by only daylighting corners and removing vehicle parking directly adjacent to schools and significant places of interest;
 - b. Use art and street furniture in newly designed spaces and daylit areas that expand the pedestrian realm on those corridors so that where parking is removed, pedestrians get a significant benefit as a result;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Community Board 9 respectfully requires NYC-DOT to confirm the implementation of these measures in writing and in a new plan presentation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that for each item listed above, Community Board 9 respectfully requests that for any study conducted according to the policies and protocols of NYC-DOT, such results

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be shared with the Board, regardless of the outcome of NYC-DOT's decision. Such documents requested include, but are not limited to, traffic control studies, intersection control data, transportation and mobility analyses, and correspondence with other agency stakeholders such as the Metropolitan Transportation Agency (MTA), and the Department of Parks and Recreation (Parks) if applicable.

VOTE: In Favor Opposed Abstention

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