

New York City
Department of Transportation

**Downtown Brooklyn
Traffic Calming Project**

May 2004

**FINAL REPORT –
APPENDIX B**

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1. STRANDS OF OUTREACH

The primary objective of the public outreach program was to harness input from as many sources as possible during each phase of the project, from planning to implementation. Input was focused in a structured manner to allow decisions to be informed by as broad a base of interests as possible. Four types of public outreach tools were used: information gathering, idea development, pilot program development and implementation, and strategy development.

The major formal mechanisms for public outreach consisted of a project Task Force convened by the Brooklyn Borough President; a Technical Advisory Committee convened by NYCDOT; and subcommittees of Brooklyn Community Boards 2 and 6, the two Community Boards within the primary study area. Community Board 8 also provided input on the secondary study area. Community Boards 2 and 6 referred monitoring of the project to their Transportation Committees. Community Board 6 convened several transportation committee public meetings to review the project strategies. In the latter stages of the project, Community Board 2 convened a task force specifically to address and respond to the draft ideas presented to them.

The outreach approach and process taken and resulting inputs are described below. Organizations represented on the Task Force and Technical Advisory Committee are listed in *Tables B1* and *B3* below.

1.1 Information gathering

Like all studies, the Downtown Brooklyn Traffic Calming Study relied on collecting enough useful information to identify problems and to develop a means of addressing them. The information gathering process relied on a partnership between those who know the area best (those who live and work there) and the consultant team. Residents and businesses have an unparalleled understanding of local issues. A partnership between local stakeholders and the consultant team was critical throughout the study, but was most important in the early information gathering stage.

For this study, data were gathered in three broad ways: collation and limited collection of hard traffic operational data, discussions with members of the community, and discussions with members of city agencies, including NYCDOT. The data collection process was the subject of an intensive effort at the beginning and continued throughout the study as the consultant's understanding of conditions in Downtown Brooklyn evolved. The hard traffic data collected through the study is summarized in *Appendix C* and is contained in the CD provided with this report.

A series of workshops was convened under the auspices of the Task Force and Community Boards to gather data regarding specific problem locations, the needs of Downtown Brooklyn, and the role that individual streets should serve. These workshops yielded many valuable insights into traffic issues in Downtown Brooklyn. Details of those workshops are provided in *Appendix A3*.

1.2 Idea development

As the project progressed and transitioned from identifying problems to examining potential solutions, interaction with members of the general community also evolved.

Information flowed in both directions and contact was ongoing. Accordingly, the format for interaction changed from small homogenous groups with a shared geographic interest to open houses set up to encourage area-wide thinking by creating geographically diverse groups of participants. This format allowed the consultant to engage those who were already a part of the process as well as new constituencies. The format is described in more detail in *Section 4* below. Information obtained at the open houses is summarized in *Appendix A3*.

1.3 Pilot program development and implementation

Development and implementation of the pilot program was based on community response to the consultant's suggestions that were presented to and discussed with the Task Force. Initial ideas for the pilot program were very limited in scope, reflecting the modest budget allocation made in the contract and the consultant's view of the pilots' role in the project. However, when the limited scope of the proposed pilot program was discussed, Task Force members indicated they had expected something more substantial. NYCDOT consulted with the other funders of the study and agreed to expand the funding and scope of the pilot program.

An expanded set of pilot program proposals was then developed and provided to Community Boards 2, 6, and 8. Those Community Boards considered the proposals and, with certain modifications, endorsed the proposals. These suggestions were then developed further, installed, and evaluated.

The pilot program represented a major point at which community expectations and the realities of the project differed. The NYCDOT and the consultant explained to the community that the purpose of the pilot program was to test specific treatments, and that locations were chosen because of the ease of implementing the treatments. The pilot treatments that were proven effective would then be incorporated into the strategy for the entire study area. Nevertheless it became clear throughout the project that some members of the community felt that the pilot program should represent a temporary but comprehensive version of the overall strategy for the area and that the process of moving from the pilot program to the final strategy should be one of reviewing and refining the pilot program and converting temporary installations into more permanent ones.

The consultant team took pains to explain that the use of temporary treatments was not only unrealistic but also counterproductive; experience around the world demonstrates the adverse effects of temporary physical treatments on the community view of traffic calming. Notwithstanding these efforts, it was not until the draft ideas for the overall strategy were presented that concerns among some members of the community about the commitment of NYCDOT and the consultant were allayed.

1.4 Strategy development

The final phase of the project revolved around turning the management framework developed with the community and the ideas for managing traffic in Downtown Brooklyn into a coherent strategy. This was achieved by preparing an ideas paper that formed the basis for intense discussion in various forums: a series of open houses, a series of Technical Advisory Committee meetings, meetings with individual agencies and, most importantly, a series of detailed working sessions with Community Board 6's Transportation Subcommittee and Community Board 2's Downtown Brooklyn

Traffic Calming Task Force. These meetings provided the forum for creating a draft strategy in a form acceptable to those committees. Committee leaders were able to work with their respective boards and committees and obtain their endorsement. In this way, the normal disagreements on the details of the strategy were dealt with within the subcommittees and were resolved without derailing the overall strategy development process.

This process proved very successful, due in large part to the intense efforts made by the members of Community Board 2's Task Force and Community Board 6's Transportation Committee.

2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The purpose of the Public Involvement Plan was to gather input from diverse constituencies during each project phase so that the project could progress with the benefit of public input and knowledge. The Plan detailed the nature of the tasks that were to be implemented, who was to be involved, and when they would occur. The Task Force, Technical Advisory Committee and Community Boards offered input regarding organizations to be included and methods of notifying the general public about the project and events. The Plan was distributed for review in September 1999. The Public Involvement Plan was supplemented by Community Participation Reports that detailed the public involvement activities conducted prior to every Task Force meeting.

3. PROJECT DEFINITION AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

3.1 Issue definition meetings

A series of seven *issues definition* meetings were held with Task Force and other community organization representatives in April and May 1999. The purpose of the meetings was to enable Task Force members to communicate their particular concerns regarding traffic movement within the study area. At these meetings, participants were given maps of Downtown Brooklyn and asked to mark and describe the problem areas. The meetings were held on the following dates:

- April 13, 1999
- April 15, 1999
- April 20, 1999
- April 22, 1999
- April 27, 1999
- April 29, 1999
- May 13, 1999

A total of 41 community representatives provided site-specific input on issues the study should address.

3.2 Working group meetings

As the project moved from site-specific issues identification to examining large geographic areas, Working Groups were formed to analyze the traffic problems for the three major geographic areas within Downtown Brooklyn. Three Working Groups comprised of approximately 10-15 Task Force members each were organized. The Working Groups provided the project team with key representation from major civic, business and community interests in Downtown Brooklyn. Further, they enabled small group discussions focused on major project issues. The groups generally followed community board geographic coverage. The first round of working group meetings were held to help determine roadway functions in the Working Group sub-areas and define the community representative's aspirations on how they would like to see the transportation network. The meetings were held:

- October 18, 1999, at the Brooklyn Montessori School, attended by 10 representatives.

- October 19, 1999, at the Brooklyn Montessori School, attended by 10 representatives.
- October 21, 1999, at the Center for Nursing, attended by 18 representatives.

A second round of Working Group meetings were held the first week of November 1999. The purpose of these meetings was to develop consensus on the priorities for street functions in the Working Group sub-areas. A complete list of the priorities raised at these meetings can be found in *Appendix A3*. The meetings were held:

- November 1, 1999, at the Brooklyn Montessori School, attended by 10 representatives.
- November 4, 1999, at PS 58, attended by 11 representatives.
- November 9, 1999, at the Pratt Institute, attended by 13 representatives.

A third round of Working Group meetings were scheduled for the end of November and early December, 1999. The purpose of these meetings was to begin discussion of potential solutions. The meetings were held:

- November 22, 1999, at Brooklyn Montessori School, attended by 12 representatives.
- November 30, 1999, at Pratt Institute, attended by 11 representatives.
- December 1, 1999, at Brooklyn Montessori School, attended by 12 representatives.

The issues raised at these meetings were grouped into the following categories:

- Pedestrian Safety
- Through Traffic
- Congestion
- Parking and Loading
- Vehicle Speed
- Bicycle Safety
- Transit Issues
- General Issues

Examples of specific concerns noted in each category are as follows (please note that a listing of all concerns under each category can be found in *Appendix D*):

- *Pedestrian Safety*: among others, the intersections along Flatbush Avenue from its beginning at the Manhattan Bridge to Atlantic Avenue presented pedestrian safety concerns;
- *Through Traffic*: among others, Hicks Street, State Street and Pierrepont Street presented pedestrian safety concerns;
- *Congestion*: among others, Smith Street and the sections of 3rd and 4th Avenues presented congestion concerns;
- *Parking and Service Vehicles*: among others, Montague Street and the Brooklyn Heights Esplanade and Atlantic Avenue presented parking and service vehicles concerns;
- *Vehicle Speed*: among others, Pacific Street and Court Street in Cobble Hill presented vehicle speed concerns;
- *Bicycle Safety*: the primary concern noted revealed that the mixing of bicycle and motorized traffic caused concern;
- *Transit Issues*: the primary concern noted was that bus transit delays are of concern;
- *General Issues*: among others, the general issues revealed that truck route enforcement, commuter vans and double parking presented concern.

Idea development in the form of community aspirations for each corridor was also recorded during this process. These aspirations are listed in *Appendix A3*.

This input – issue identification and idea development – was used to form the strategy of asking the public to first approach the issue of traffic calming by defining the corridor and nature of the streets within Downtown Brooklyn as “Travel,” “Community,” and “Living” streets. This strategy allowed the project team the opportunity to gather anecdotal data that is only known to those who live or work in Downtown Brooklyn.

3.3 Consultative Forums

Throughout the study, the project team and community met in various consultative forums:

3.3.1 Task Force

The study Task Force was formed and managed by the Brooklyn Borough President’s Office. It met on a number of occasions through the course of the study and was the primary formal conduit of information between the study team and the broad range of non-technical stakeholders in Downtown Brooklyn. The Task Force member organizations are listed in *Table B1*. The dates and focus of the Task Force meetings are summarized in *Table B2*.

Table B1. Task Force Members

Agency/Organization
Honorable Major Owens
Honorable Edolphus Towns
Honorable Nydia Velazquez
Honorable Martin Connor
Honorable Marty Markowitz
Honorable Velmanette Montgomery
Honorable James Brennan
Honorable Roger Green
Honorable Joseph Lenton
Honorable Felix Ortiz
Honorable Steven DiBrienza
Honorable Kenneth Fisher
Honorable Angel Rodriguez
Honorable Mary Pinkett
Honorable Annette Robinson
Honorable Carl Kruger
Community Board #2
Community Board #6
Community Board #8
Boerum Hill Association
Brooklyn Heights Association
Carroll Gardens Association
Fulton Mall Improvement Association
MetroTech
Atlantic Avenue Association LDC
Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association
Fulton Ferry Landing Association
Transportation Alternatives
Brooklyn Bridge Park
Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce
Care About The Slope
DUMBO
Vinegar Hill Association
Watchtower Bible
Concord Village
Brooklyn Heights Protection
Atlantic Village Homeowners
Fort Greene Association
First Atlantic Terminal Housing
Montague Street District Management Association

Mayor's Office of Transportation
NYC DOT
NYC DOT-OMC
MTA New York City Transit
NYC Department of Sanitation
FDNY
Police – SATCOM
NYC Comptroller
Brooklyn Union Gas
Consolidated Edison
Bell Atlantic
Time Warner Cable
Community Consulting Services

Table B2. Task Force Meetings

Task Force Meeting Date	Task Force Meeting Topic
Meeting #1 – March 31, 1999	Project Introduction & Overview, Community Outreach Program
Meeting #2 – October 20, 1999	Presentation of Issues Identification and Data Collection and Analysis, Community Outreach Program Working Group meetings
Meeting #3 – January 26, 2000	Proposed Community Outreach methodology for Phase II, presentation of pilot program measures
Meeting #4 – March 30, 2000	Presentation of specific pilot program locations
Meeting #5 – June 16, 2000	Presentation of revised pilot program, introduction to draft area wide strategy
Meeting #6 – November 20, 2000	Further discussion of revised pilot program measures, draft area wide strategy community outreach methodology
Meeting #7 – April 16, 2002	Presentation of Draft Area Wide Strategy and pilot program findings
Meeting #8 – June 3, 2003	Presentation of Final Report

3.3.2 Technical Advisory Committee

This was the agency analog of the Task Force and comprised representatives of all relevant agencies active in Downtown Brooklyn. These are listed in *Table B3*. The Technical Advisory Committee met a number of times through the study, as shown in *Table B4*.

Table B3. Technical Advisory Committee Agencies

Brooklyn Borough President's Office
Brooklyn Community Board #2
Brooklyn Community Board #6
Brooklyn Community Board #8
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration
Fire Department of New York
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination
Mayor's Office of Transportation
Metropolitan Transportation Authority – New York City Transit
New York City Council Districts 33 & 39
New York City Department of City Planning
New York City Department of Design and Construction
New York City Department of Environmental Conservation
New York City Department of Transportation – Brooklyn Arterial Maintenance
New York City Department of Transportation – Brooklyn Borough Engineer
New York City Department of Transportation – Capital Planning
New York City Department of Transportation – Highway Engineering
New York City Department of Transportation – Management Information Systems
New York City Department of Transportation – Construction Mitigation & Coordination
New York City Department of Transportation – Brooklyn Borough Commissioner
New York City Department of Transportation – Planning & Urban Mobility
New York City Department of Transportation – Press Office & Public Relations
New York City Department of Transportation – Signals & Street Lighting
New York City Economic Development Corporation
New York City Police Department
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
New York State Assembly District 52
New York State Senate District 18 & 25

New York State Department of Transportation
United States Environmental Protection Agency

Table B4. Technical Advisory Committee Meetings

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
Meeting #1 – March 26, 1999	Project introduction and overview, purpose of TAC
Meeting #2 – February 3, 2000	Overview of street management framework, data collection, evaluation measures, area wide strategy and proposed pilot program.
Meeting #3 – March 5, 2002	Presentation of Draft Area Wide Strategy
Meeting #4 – June 2003	Presentation of Final Report

3.3.3 Community Boards

The primary study area and most of the secondary study area fell within Community Boards 2 and 6. A small part of the secondary study area fell within Community Board 8. The consultant team made a number of presentations to the community board transportation committees (and, in the case of Community Board 2, its task force) and worked closely with them to turn the ideas paper described in *Section 7* of the main report into the draft strategy.

The project consultant was invited to and attended the following Community Board Meetings to discuss and listen to issues regarding the Downtown Brooklyn Traffic Calming Project. The meetings attended are as follows:

- November 16, 1999 – Community Board #2 Transportation Committee
- November 23, 1999 – Community Board #8 Transportation Committee
- December 1, 1999 – Community Board #6 District Service Cabinet Meeting
- December 2, 1999 – Community Board #6 Transportation Committee
- December 15, 1999 – Community Board #2 Joint Land Use and Transportation Committees
- February 22, 2000 - Community Board #8 Transportation Committee.
- February 24, 2000 - Community Board #6 Transportation Committee.
- March 21, 2000 - Community Board #2 Transportation Committee.
- April 18, 2000 - Community Board #2 Transportation Committee.
- April 25, 2000 - Community Board #8 Transportation Committee.

- May 4, 2000 - Community Board #6 Transportation Committee.
- October 17, 2000 - Community Board #2 Transportation Committee.
- November 21, 2000 - Community Board #2 Transportation Committee.
- October 16, 2001 – Community Board #2 Transportation Committee
- January 24, 2002 – Community Board #6 Transportation Committee
- February 19, 2002 – Community Board #2 Transportation Committee
- February 28, 2002 – Community Board #6 Transportation Committee
- March 14, 2002 – Community Board #6 Transportation Committee
- April 9, 2002 – Community Board #2 Traffic Calming Task Force
- April 15, 2002 – Community Board #2 Traffic Calming Task Force

4. PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

4.1 Open Houses

Three introductory open houses were held to share with the community-at-large the results of the issues definition meetings and data collection, and to receive further input on issues that should be addressed. The open houses were held:

- August 31, 1999 at the Brooklyn Business Library, attended by 113 people.
- October 12, 1999 at Pratt Institute, attended by 12 people.
- October 14, 1999 at P.S. 58, attended by 25 people.

A second round of symposium open houses took place in December 1999. The purpose of these symposium open houses was to report to the public the findings of the Working Group meetings and to receive public input concerning traffic calming aspirations and objectives. The open houses were held:

- December 6, 1999 at the Brooklyn Masonic Temple; attended by 10 people
- December 9, 1999 – two sessions (one afternoon and one evening) at the MetroTech Center; attended in total by 68 people
- December 13, 1999 at Middle School 51; attended by 8 people.
- December 14, 1999 at PS 58; attended by 30 people.

A third round of open houses took place in December 2001. The purpose of these open houses was to present the Draft Area Wide Strategy to the public and receive their comments. The open houses were held:

- December 1, 2001 at PS 58; attended by 49 people.
- December 3, 2001 at MetroTech Center; attended by 62 people.

A copy of the presentations made by project staff at each of these open houses is included on the CD enclosed with this report.

4.2 Newsletters

A newsletter introducing the study and describing initial status was issued August 30, 1999. The newsletter outlined the project background, community outreach efforts, what had happened so far, an explanation of the study area and what the next steps were going to be. In addition to being available at the open houses, 3,600 copies were distributed to libraries, community boards, elected officials, community, civic and business organizations, and large residential complexes. A public comment

form, inviting community members to provide additional input was included in the newsletter.

A second newsletter described the objectives for traffic calming developed with the working groups, the physical devices that could be used to alter driver behavior or to improve pedestrian safety at crossing locations, and the myths about traffic calming that needed to be dispelled to develop a successful project. The newsletters were available at open houses and 2,000 copies were distributed to libraries, community boards, elected officials, task force members community, civic and business organizations, and large residential complexes.

Press releases were drafted to inform the public about the following events:

- Project Kick Off
- Project Definition Meetings
- Open Houses
- Pilot Program commencement

4.3 Project e-mail address

A project email account, bktrfcalm@aol.com, was established to give stakeholders the opportunity to provide comments or ask questions from their home or office at a time of their choosing.

5. DOCUMENTATION

Public Participation Reports documented the public outreach activities conducted, the community board and other organization meetings attended, and the correspondence received during the period prior to every Task Force Meeting.