



October 6, 2016

Re: “Love locks” on the Brooklyn Bridge

Dear Tour Guide Book Editor:

As New York City Transportation Commissioner, I write today about the Brooklyn Bridge, our treasured 133-year old New York City landmark. My agency is responsible for the bridge’s operation, maintenance, and safety -- and this week we are making an important announcement that I am hopeful you can help us further publicize.

Most USA and New York City tourism guidebooks highly and rightly recommend the Brooklyn Bridge as an indispensable part of a visit to our City – and we wholeheartedly agree with the enthusiasm of the nearly 4 million visitors who enjoy the free walk across the bridge every year. In fact, my agency [is actively exploring ways to expand capacity for the pedestrian promenade, which has grown even more popular in recent years.](#) Unfortunately, along with that growth in popularity, serious safety and maintenance problems are being caused by so-called “love locks” being left on the bridge.

As you probably know, the Brooklyn Bridge is one of many bridges around the world popular to tourists that has been beset with padlocks over the past decade, attached by couples as a symbol of their commitment to each other. Here in New York City, locks on the Brooklyn Bridge have grown in recent years from a nuisance that has cost the City hundreds of thousands of dollars to remove into a danger -- as the weight of the locks recently snapped a support wire over vehicular traffic.

So we respectfully ask that any write-up about the Brooklyn Bridge in your guidebook for the foreseeable future actively discourage leaving a “love lock” or other commemoration of a visit. While we are also this week announcing playful new signs (attached, please feel free to reproduce in your books with attribution) and the enforcement of penalties, we truly believe the best solution is one of prevention. That is, informed readers of your guidebook should know that these locks are causing serious damage to one of our City’s and our nation’s most stunning and historic structures.

Visitors to the Brooklyn Bridge should be perhaps be given a variation of the maxim told to visitors to American national parks: “Take only selfies; leave only footprints.”

We appreciate your assistance -- and hope you can help us find ways for visitors to New York City discover safer and much more romantic ways of enjoying it.

Sincerely,

Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner