



*Donovan Richards*  
*Queens Borough President*

## Community Board No. 2

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*Anatole Ashraf*  
*Chairperson*

*Debra Markell Kleinert*  
*District Manager*

December 12, 2025

Honorable Sean Duffy  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Honorable Ydanis Rodriguez  
Commissioner  
NYC Department of Transportation  
55 Water Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10041

Eric Koester  
Regional Director  
NYS Department of Transportation  
Hunters Point Plaza  
47-40 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Long Island City, New York 11101

RE: **Borden Avenue Street End & Dutch Kills Waterfront – Stewardship and Public Use Proposal**

Dear Secretary Duffy, Commissioner Rodriguez and Mr. Koester:

Queens Community Board 2 writes to express its strong support for advancing a community-led stewardship and public-use vision for the Borden Avenue street end and the under-expressway areas along Dutch Kills, as presented to the Land Use & Housing Committee by Gil Lopez of Big Reuse.

This site – located at the Borden Avenue dead end beneath the Long Island Expressway – is a unique waterfront access point, a critical junction of multiple greenway routes, and one of the most underserved and environmentally burdened corners of Long Island City. For decades, the

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area has suffered from illegal dumping, unsafe parking, contaminated runoff, and lack of public oversight. Community members have stepped in where agencies have not, creating stormwater planters, informal recreation spaces, and environmental programming despite the absence of infrastructure, lighting, or formal jurisdiction.

The proposal before us offers the first coherent, public-minded alternative to the cycle of neglect that has defined this site. Specifically, the Board supports the following components:

1. Street-End & Skate Park Area (DOT roadway / adjacent city-owned land)
  - a. Transfer or license the street end to NYC Parks for the creation of a public waterfront park and a safe, code-compliant skate park.
  - b. Support a community-oriented design that replaces ad-hoc structures with professionally built, permanent recreational features.
2. Waterfront Under the Long Island Expressway (NYS DOT / US DOT structures)
  - a. Grant Newtown Creek Alliance a stewardship license or partnership agreement to create public waterfront access, light recreational use, an environmental boathouse/storage facility, and safe programming along the Dutch Kills shoreline.
  - b. Preserve this area for public and ecological uses rather than industrial parking, storage, or private leasing.
3. Under-Expressway Yard Behind Sparks (DOT-controlled space)
  - a. License Big Reuse to operate a horticulture and community greening yard, supporting street-tree care, local gardens, school programs, soil/mulch distribution, and climate-resilience activities.
  - b. Provide stability for their DEC-funded tree-planting and composting programs, which urgently need a long-term home.

This proposal addresses multiple public priorities simultaneously:

- environmentally beneficial reuse of under-bridge space;
- new public access to the waterfront;
- safer, cleaner conditions on a long-neglected street end;
- climate-resilience and green-infrastructure activation;
- and strong alignment with the community's long-standing vision for the Dutch Kills / Newtown Creek waterfront.

The timing is urgent. Expected maintenance and rehabilitation work on the LIE will inevitably reset conditions in the area. Without a proactive plan and clear agency commitments, the site risks reverting to hazardous uses – illegal dumping, scrapping, fluid spills, and uncontrolled parking. A community-based stewardship structure is the only way to ensure public benefit is sustained after any future displacement.

For all these reasons, Queens Community Board 2's Land Use Committee urges NYC DOT, NYS DOT, and USDOT to work directly with Big Reuse and the Newtown Creek Alliance to establish the necessary licenses, permissions, and inter-agency coordination required to realize this public vision. We ask that agencies prioritize public access, environmental restoration, and community stewardship when determining future use of this land.

We thank you for your consideration and welcome further dialogue as agencies advance next steps.

Sincerely,



Anatole Ashraf  
Chairperson, Queens Community Board 2

*Christine Hunter*

Christine Hunter  
Chair, Queens Community Board 2 Land Use & Housing Committee

*Prameet Kumar*

Prameet Kumar  
Vice Chair, Queens Community Board 2 Land Use & Housing Committee



Reily Owens,  
Chair, Queens Community Board 2 Transportation Committee



Debra Markell Kleinert  
District Manager  
Queens Community Borad 2

Cc: Honorable Grace Meng, US Congress  
Honorable Nydia M. Velazquez, US Congress  
Honorable Michael Gianaris, NY State Senate  
Honorable Kristen Gonzalez, NY State Senate  
Honorable Jessica Ramos, NY State Senate  
Honorable Claire Valdez, NYS Assembly  
Honorable Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, NYS Assembly

Honorable Zohran Mamdani, NYS Assembly  
Honorable Steven Raga, NYS Assembly  
Honorable Robert Holden, NYC Council Member  
Honorable Shekar Krishnan, NYC Council Member  
Honorable Julie Won, NYC Council Member  
Honorable Donovan Richards, Queens Borough President  
Jackie Langsam, City of New York Parks & Recreation Department  
Anthony Pereira, New York State DEC  
Anatole Ashraf, Chairperson, Community Board 2  
Willis Elkins, Newtown Creek Alliance  
Gil Lopez, Big Resue