

Audubon Avenue Open Street

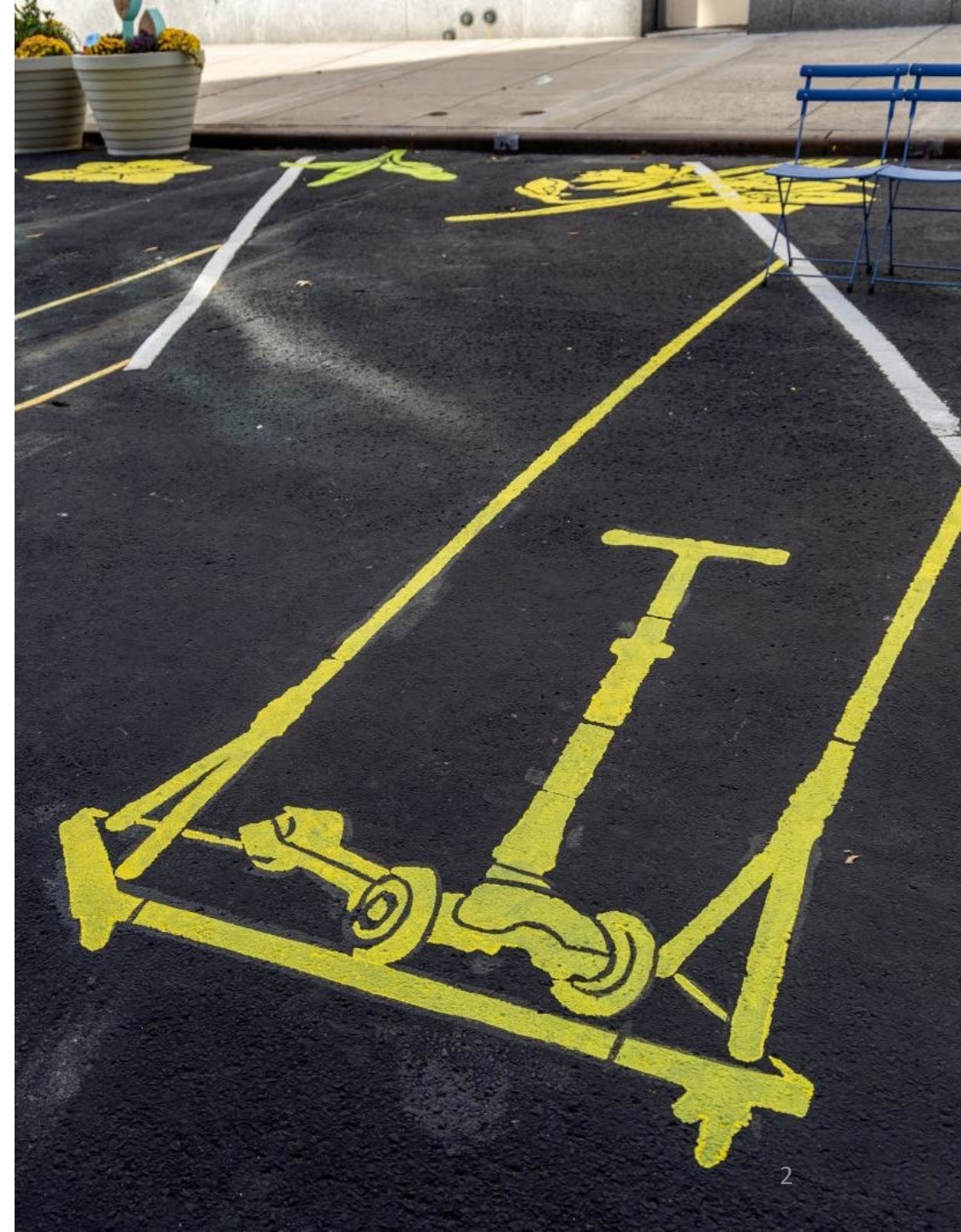
Manhattan Community Board 12

Traffic and Transportation Committee Update

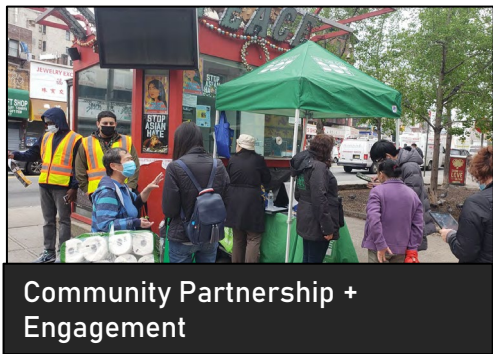
September 2025

Agenda

- Project and Program Overview
- Plaza Proposal and Community Outreach Overview
- Next Steps



NYC DOT Public Realm



Project and Program Overview

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Pre Open Street History

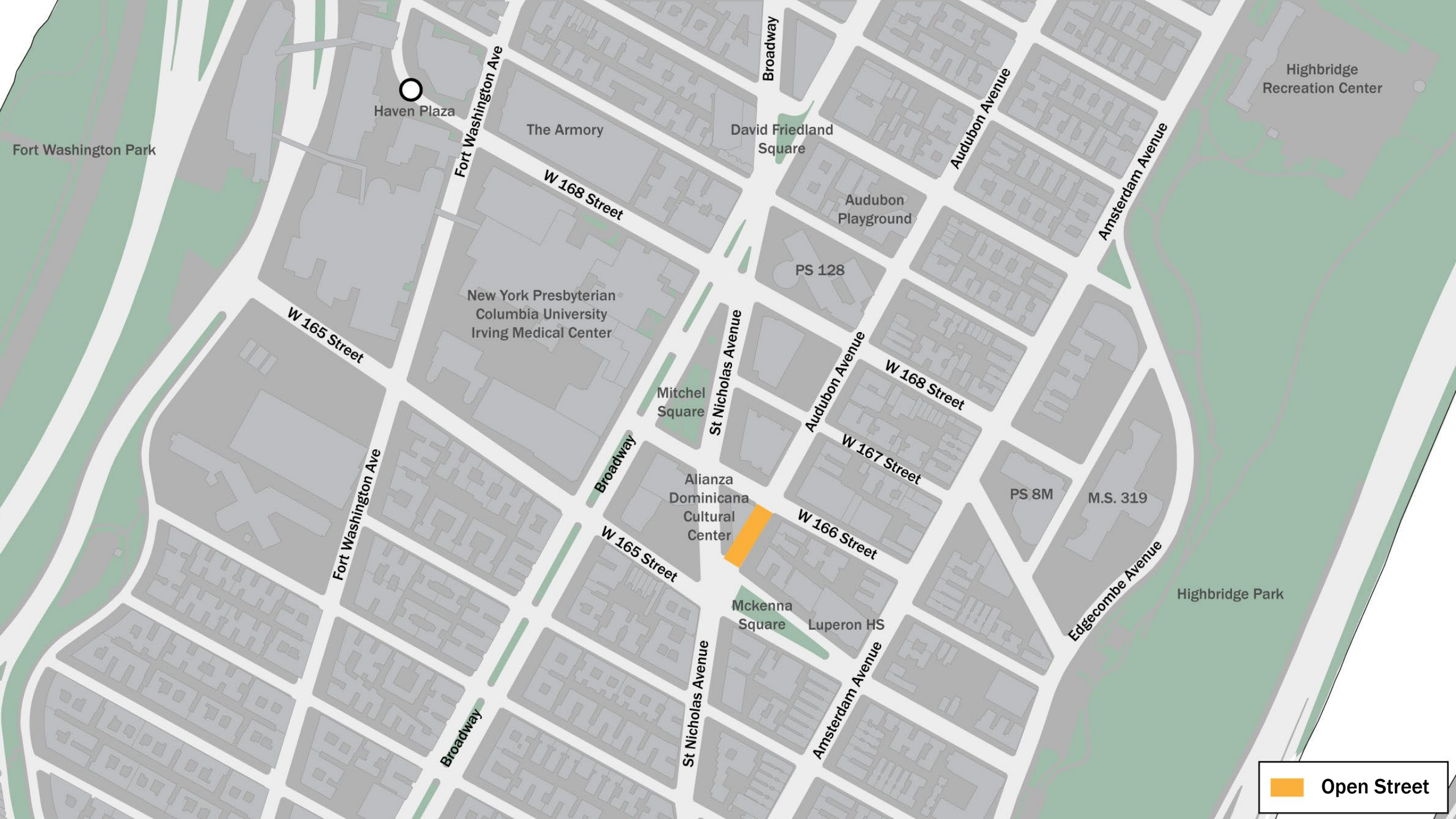
- DOT implemented a street improvement project at St. Nicholas, Audubon, and W 165 St in Summer 2020
- The project simplified a very complex intersection making it safer for pedestrians and easier crossings



Open Street Overview

- Piloted Open Street: Full Closure since summer 2024 – 24/7 schedule
- Daily maintenance and operations services by the Hort (DOT contractor)
 - Setting up/breaking down tables, chairs, and umbrellas daily
 - 2x daily sweeping + cleaning, and pressure washing monthly
 - Horticulture care seasonally
 - Ongoing programming
- Per program legislation, successful Open Streets are considered for permanent streetscape and traffic calming elements





 Open Street



Car Free Earth Day

First event in April 2024 w/ Kids Fest



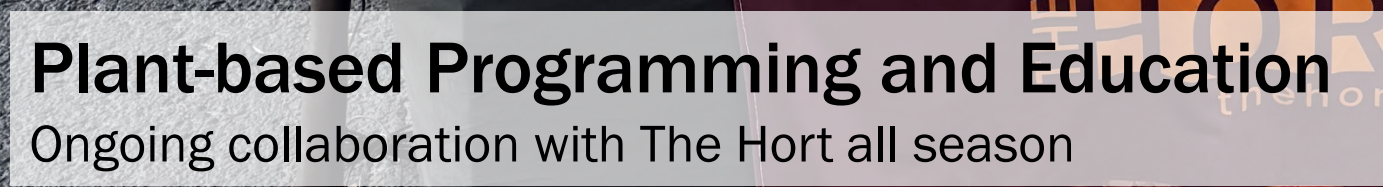
Open Street Implementation Day

Event in July 2024 with The Hort and Community League of the Heights (CLOTH)



Pollinator Port Project – Habitats for Bees

Ongoing collaboration with The Hort and Rutgers University

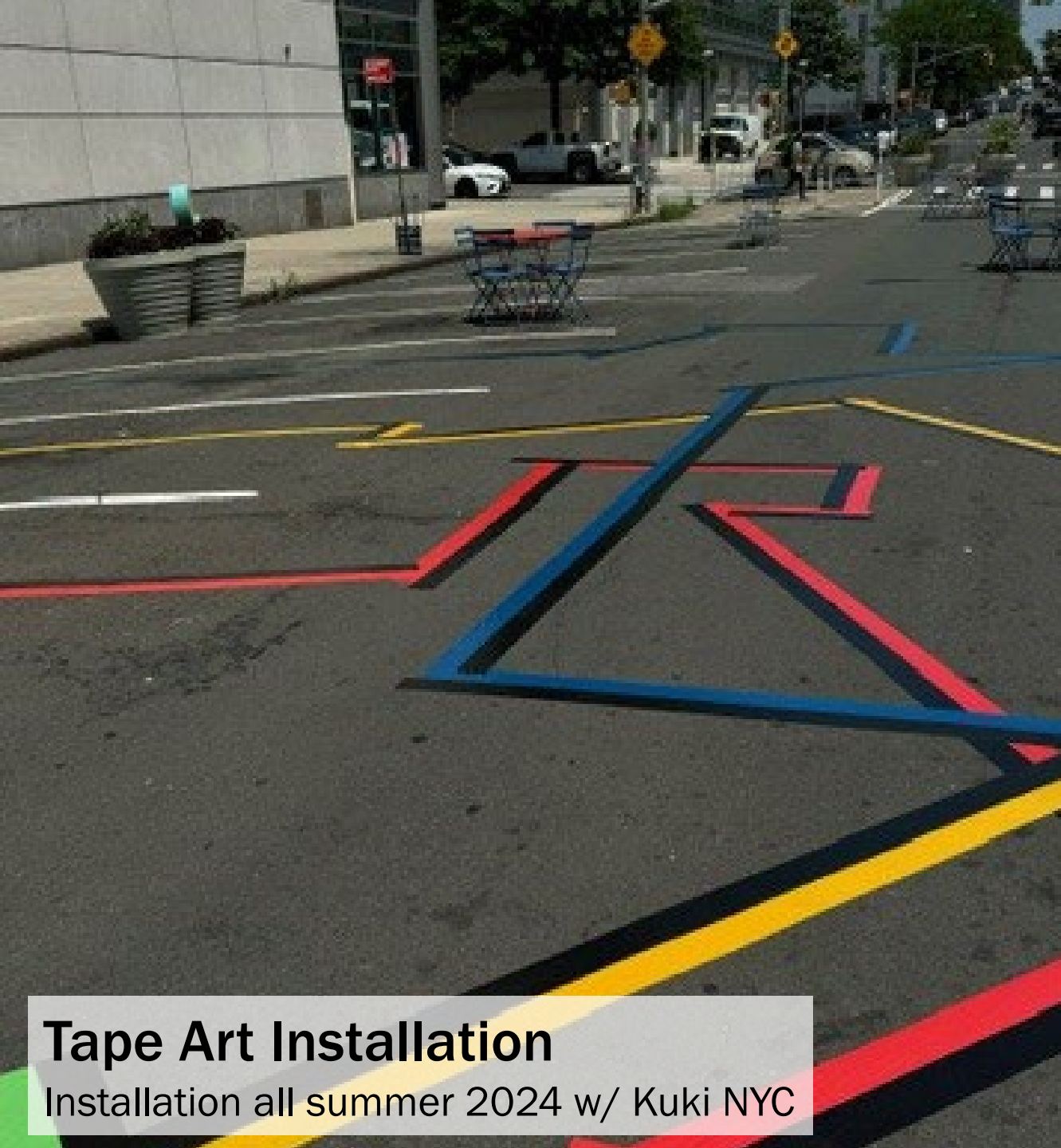


Plant-based Programming and Education

Ongoing collaboration with The Hort all season

Plant-based Programming and Education

Ongoing collaboration with The Hort all season



Tape Art Installation

Installation all summer 2024 w/ Kuki NYC



Bindlestiff Family Cirkus
August 2024 event



Street Lab Programming
10 events in summer 2024



Street Lab Programming
10 events in summer 2024



Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration

Event in September 2024 w/ Salsa Stories





Health Education Outreach

Event in September 2024 w/ NY Presbyterian/CHALK



Fall Programming – Music Series

4 events in October 2024 w/Juan Usera and Sambuco Tribe



Shine the Light on Domestic Violence Event

Event in October 2024 w/ Manhattan District Attorney's Office



Trick or Streets – Signature Event

Event in October 2024 w/ NYC DOT and NYC Kids Fest



Asphalt Art – Stencil Mural Installation

November 2024 w/ Street Lab, Artist Mildor Chevalier, and Washington Heights Community



Asphalt Art – Completed Mural

November 2024 w/ Street Lab, Artist Mildor Chevalier, and Washington Heights Community

© NYC DOT



3 New Trees Planted by the Hort!

Planted two American Elm trees and one Gingko tree in November 2024



LOVE Event for Valentine's Day
February 2025 with Hive Public Space



Learn to Ride Classes and Free Bike Rental

Car-free Earth Day April 2025 with I Challenge Myself and Unlimited Biking



Street Lab Programming

May 2025 – 2 pop ups



NO STANDING
Anytime

New York Presbyterian
Ambulatory Care Network

Family Planning Center
& Young Men's Clinic

Centers for Community Health & Education

New York Presbyterian
Ambulatory Care Network

Health Education Outreach
New York Presbyterian tabling in July 2025

Community Outreach and Plaza Proposal Overview

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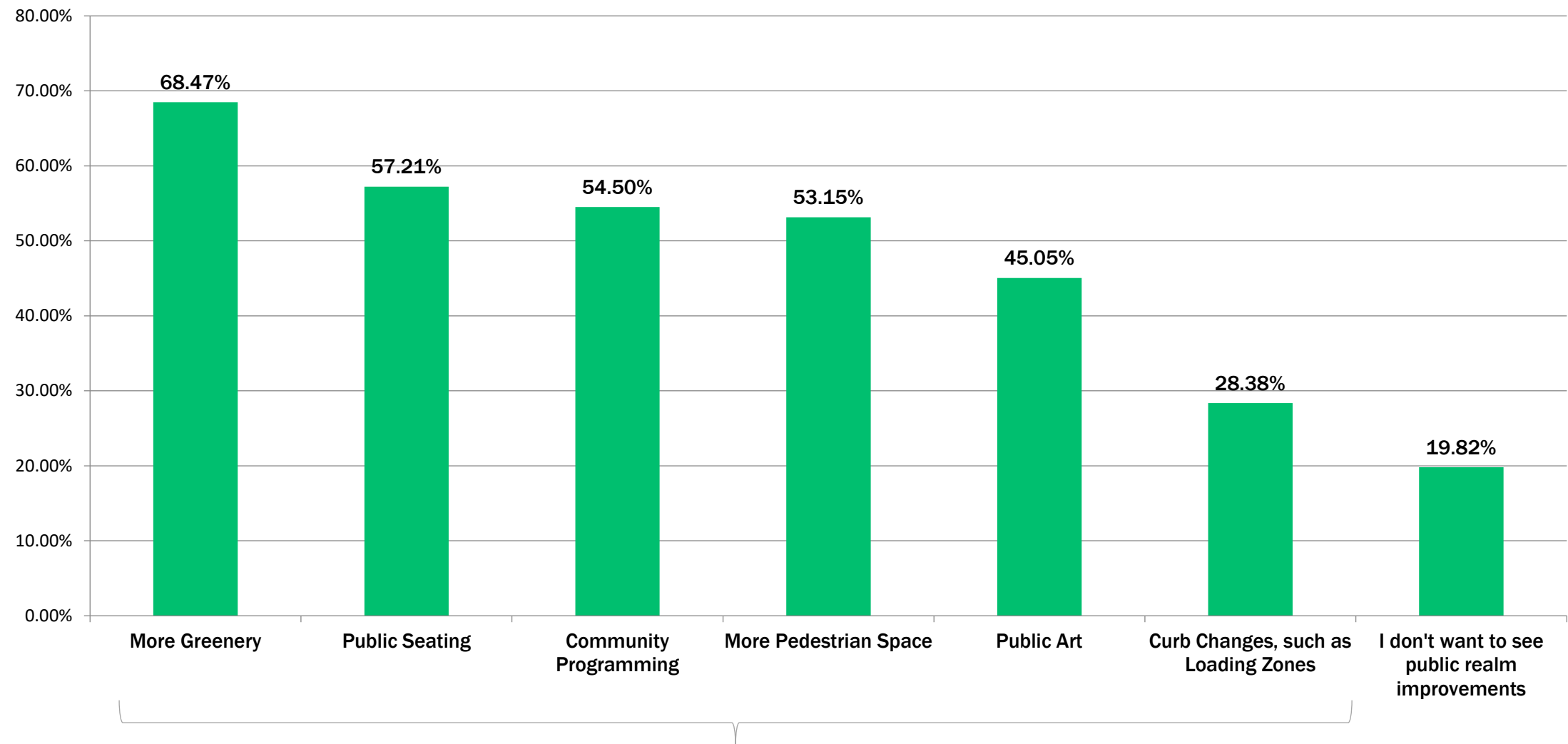
Community Feedback Survey

- Throughout the summer and fall 2024, NYC DOT facilitated a feedback survey for the community to share comments and ideas for the Audubon Open Street
- The survey was promoted via signage, email outreach, newsletters, and so on.
- The survey was available in both English and Spanish
- **259 individuals responded to the survey between June 2024 and January 2025**



Community Feedback Survey Results

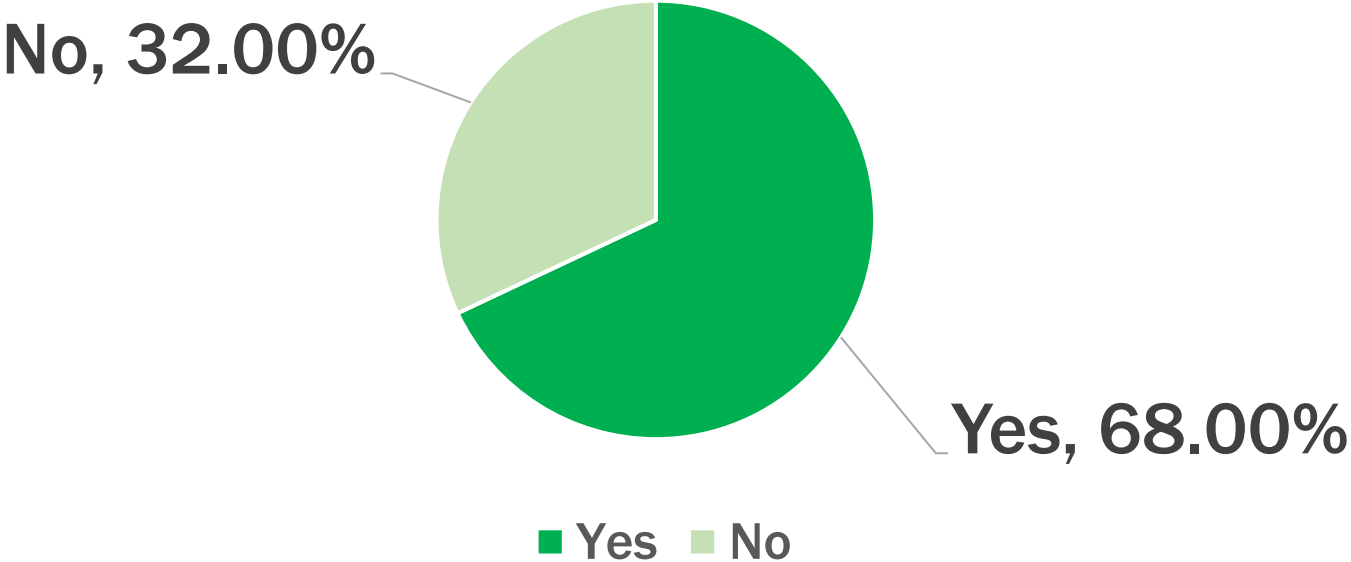
What are some public realm improvements you would like to see on Audubon Avenue? Select all that apply.



Approx. 80% of respondents wanted to see some type of public realm improvements.

Community Feedback Survey Results

Do you want to see the proposed Open Street on Audubon Avenue?



Positive Feedback:

- **Community Space:** Many respondents appreciate the idea of creating an open space for community use
- **Pedestrian Safety:** Some feedback highlighted the improvement in pedestrian safety, particularly for children, elderly, and residents who walk in the area.
- **Support for Local Businesses:** A few responses suggested that creating pedestrian spaces boosts business activity nearby

Concerns and Other Feedback:

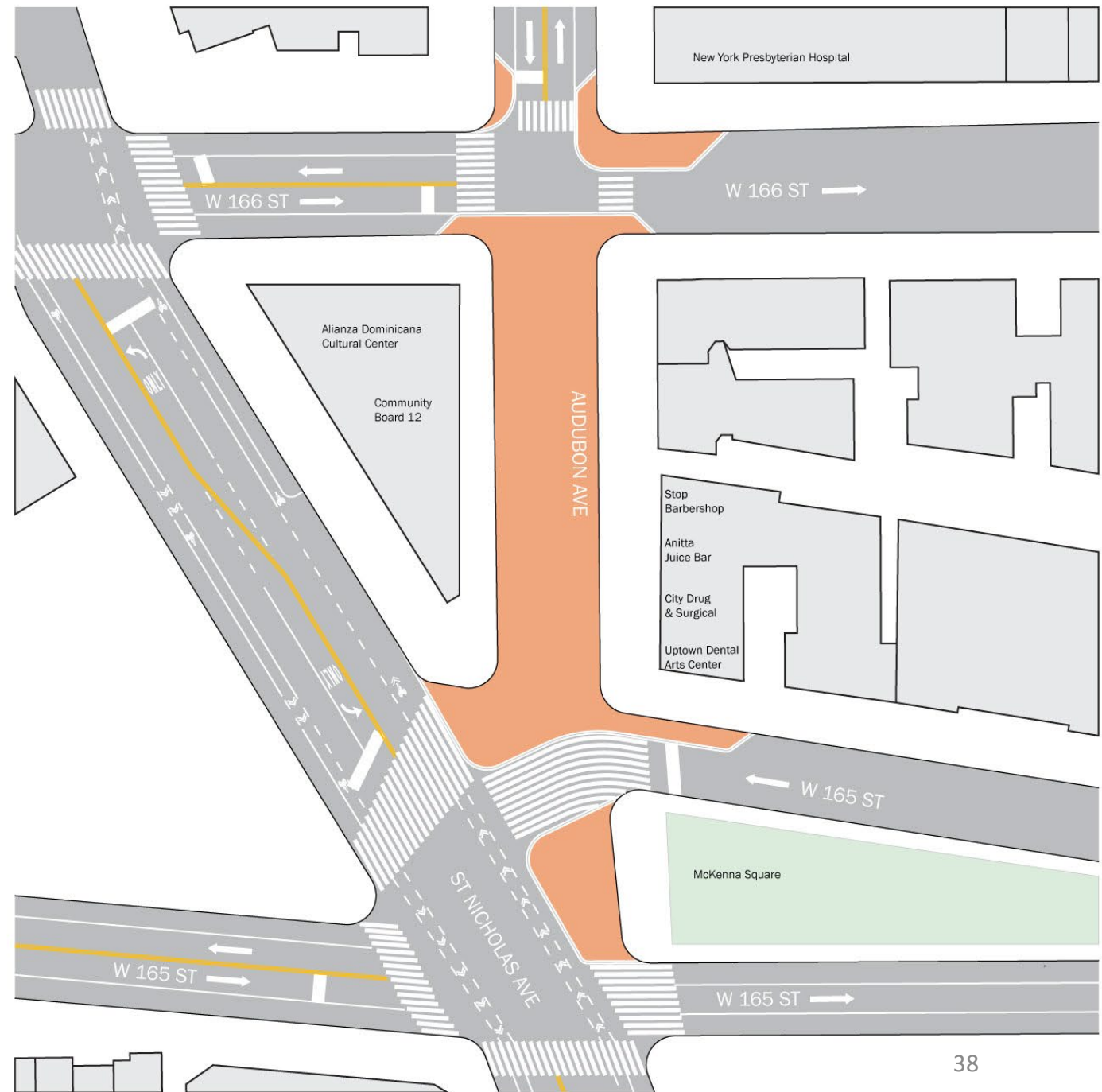
- **Parking Issues:** Some responses focused on the loss of parking spaces because of the Open Street
- **Disruption to Local Traffic:** A few responses mentioned the disruption caused by diverting traffic and how it affects those who rely on vehicles to navigate the area
- **Quality of Life Issues:** Some respondents noted certain quality of life impacts as a result of the Open Street

Plaza Proposal

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Plaza Design

- Formally redesign Audubon Ave between W 165 and W 166 Sts as a pedestrian plaza
- Using in-house materials like pavement markings, planters, granite blocks, flexible delineators, and movable furniture to element
- Working with an artist to do public art mural as ground treatment



Plaza Toolkit



UMBRELLAS

MOVABLE
FURNITURE

Public
Art or
EPOXY
GRAVEL

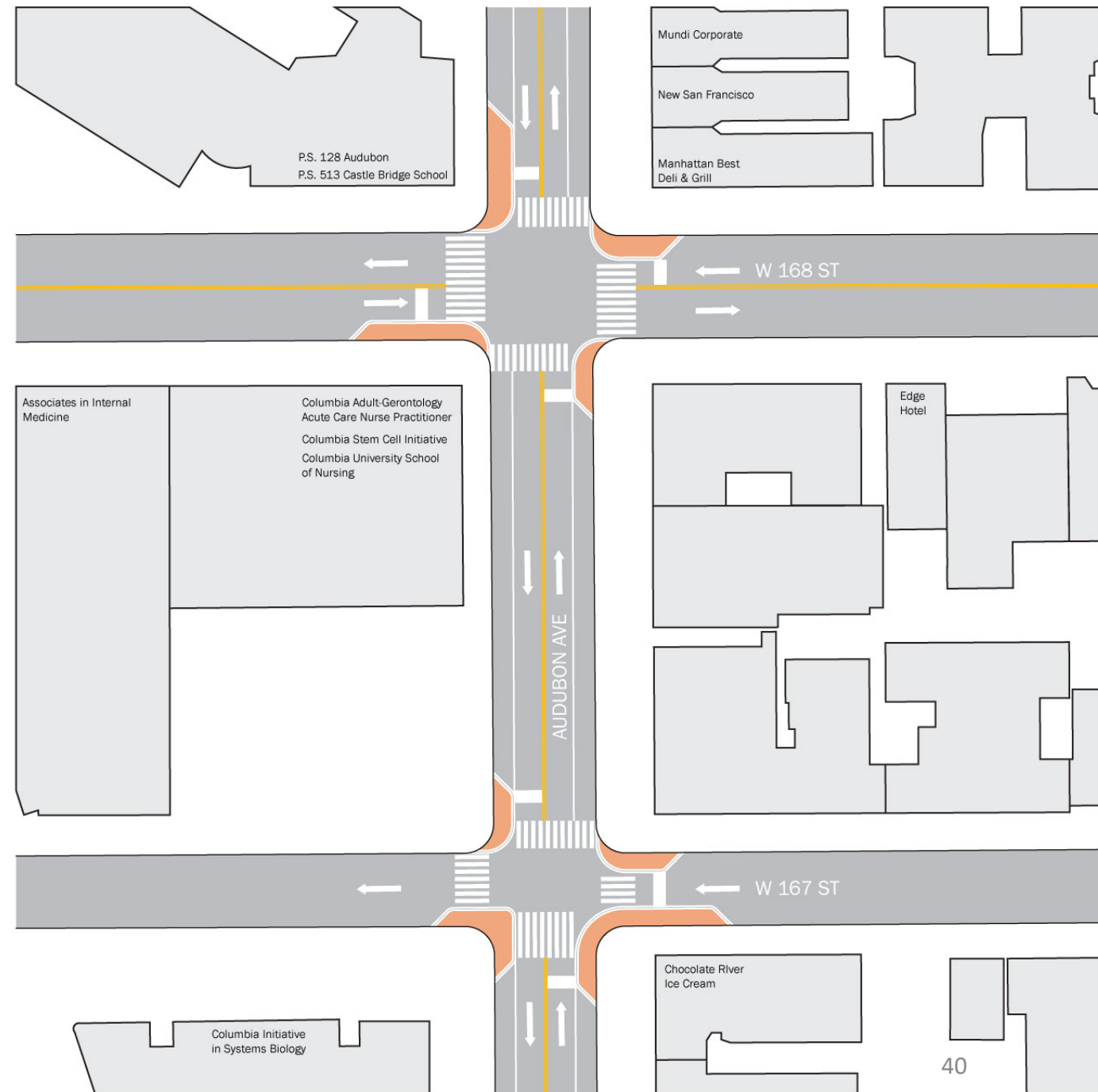
FLEXIBLE
DELINEATORS

GRANITE
BLOCKS

PLANTERS

W 167-W 168 Design

- Add curb extensions at W 167 St and Audubon Ave and W 168 St and Audubon Ave
- Shortens crossing distances, increases visibility between pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, and adds space for amenities (planters, bike corrals, etc.)
- Implemented using standard DOT materials, using epoxy gravel as a ground treatment



Curb Extensions



Plaza Proposal Outreach

- NYC DOT partnered with Street Lab to collect community feedback and ideas for the plaza proposal on Audubon Avenue
- Using its IMAGINE pop up, Street Lab hosted 6 community workshops on Audubon in June and September 2025
- IMAGINE is Street Lab's pop-up community engagement program complete with different hands-on activities and display panels that help facilitate engagement



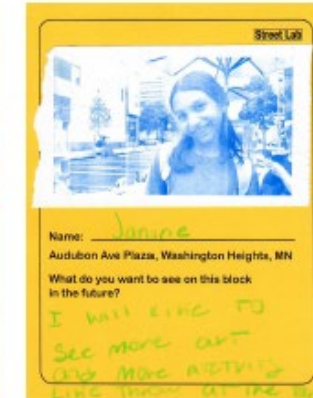
Plaza Proposal Outreach

- Feedback was overall positive, as participants both young and old shared their pleasure and excitement about the new plaza.
- When asked how the new community space made participants feel, they shared “happy/feliz,” “fortunate,” “grateful,” and “connected to community,” among others.
- Participants shared memories of summer growing up in the neighborhood playing games in the street like stickball and baseball, riding bikes, going on walks with friends, and connected these activities to things that could be done in the new plaza.

What do you want to see on this block in the future?



"Obras de teatro para publico general"



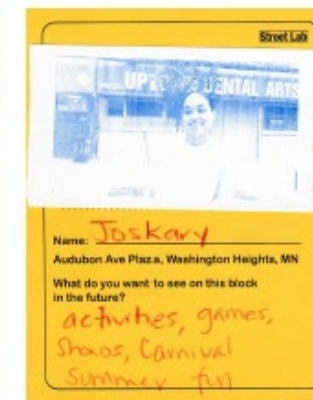
"I will like to see more art and more activity like throw at the target"



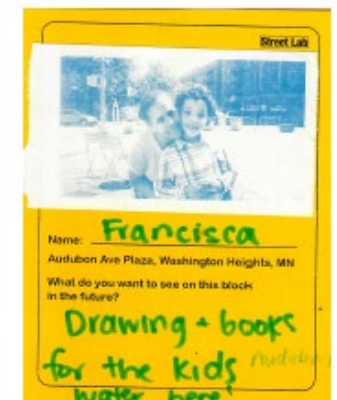
"Heno de algo. La gente visitando pasar el tiempo"



"I want to sing"

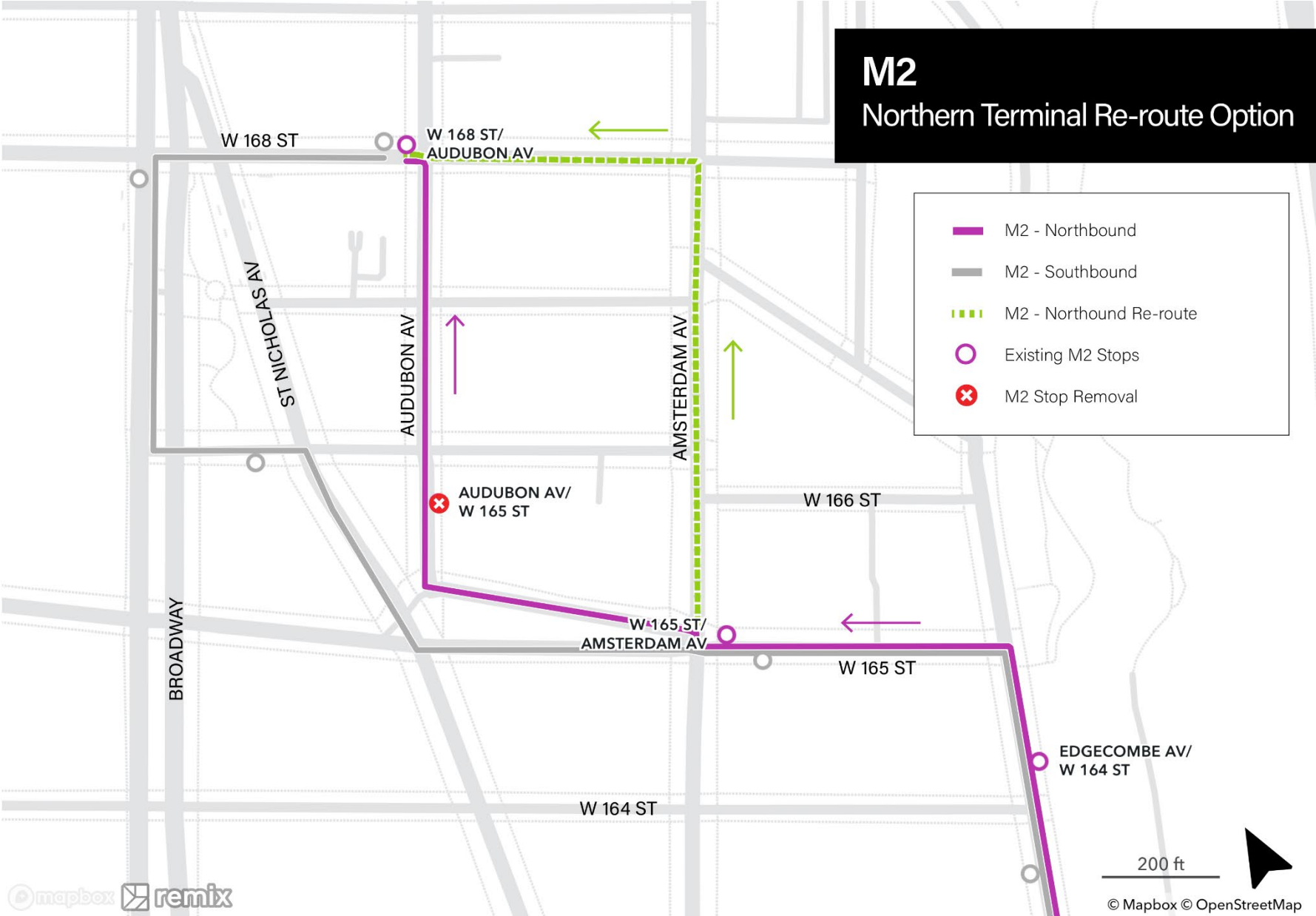


"Activities, games, shows, carnival, summer fun"



"Drawing + books for the kids water here!"

MTA M2 Bus Re-Route Since Summer 2024



Plaza Rules

- When using pedestrian plazas, everyone must comply with all plaza rules posted in Chapter 4 of Title 34 of the Rules of the City of New York
- Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO) permits are required for all events and programming in the plaza. Apply at nyc.gov/SAPO
- Anyone can apply to host an event or programming in the plaza as long as they get a SAPO permit
- SAPO permits are reviewed by the Community Board and NYPD and they may recommend approval or denial
- Other permits may be required for events (e.g. amplified sound permits, etc.)



29th Street Plaza

Welcome!

We want you to have a safe and enjoyable time.
Be courteous and respectful to others, and
please keep the plaza clean.

Pedestrian Plaza Rules Prohibit:

- Obstruction of pedestrian traffic
- Destruction, removal or tampering of any property or equipment
- Camping
- Unattended property
- A person or their belongings taking up more than one seat
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages, except as otherwise permitted
- Skateboarding
- Feeding of undomesticated animals
- Spitting, urination, defecation
- Unreasonable noise
- Dogs off-leash



Permits are required for all events

Bicycle riding is only permitted on designated routes or
where indicated by signage or markings

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

To learn more visit nyc.gov/plazas
or call 311

Art Mural

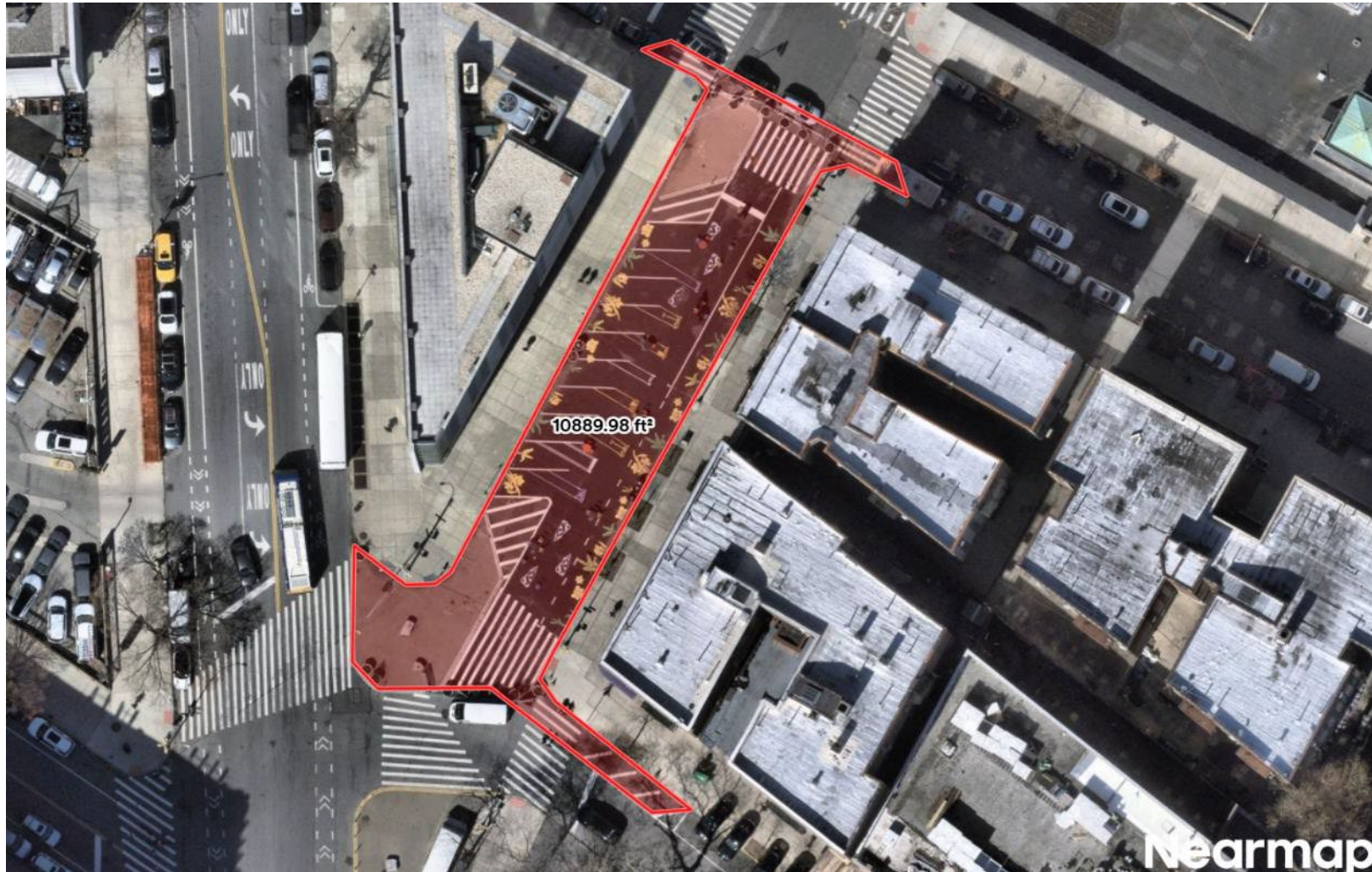
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DOT Art Program Overview

NYC DOT Art commissions artists to design and paint temporary murals onto fully pedestrianized asphalt spaces, concrete jersey barriers, and other eligible NYC DOT infrastructure. Professional artists may apply to NYC DOT Art's biennial open call soliciting qualifications to be selected for inclusion in an artist registry, and the opportunity to be short-listed to create a proposal for specific mural opportunities.



Mural Scope



Talisa Almonte, Artist



Talisa Almonte, Artist

www.almontestudio.com

Recommended for Audubon Asphalt Art

Mural Experience: I've been painting murals since 2022 where I started with a local shop in Astoria. I since then have painted 2 asphalt murals with NYC DOT and have painted large walls for small businesses, a wooden panel for Ottomanelli's restaurant, and have painted objects like a 96 gallon trash can for Coachella Music Festival and a wooden playhouse for the Brooklyn Children's Museum.

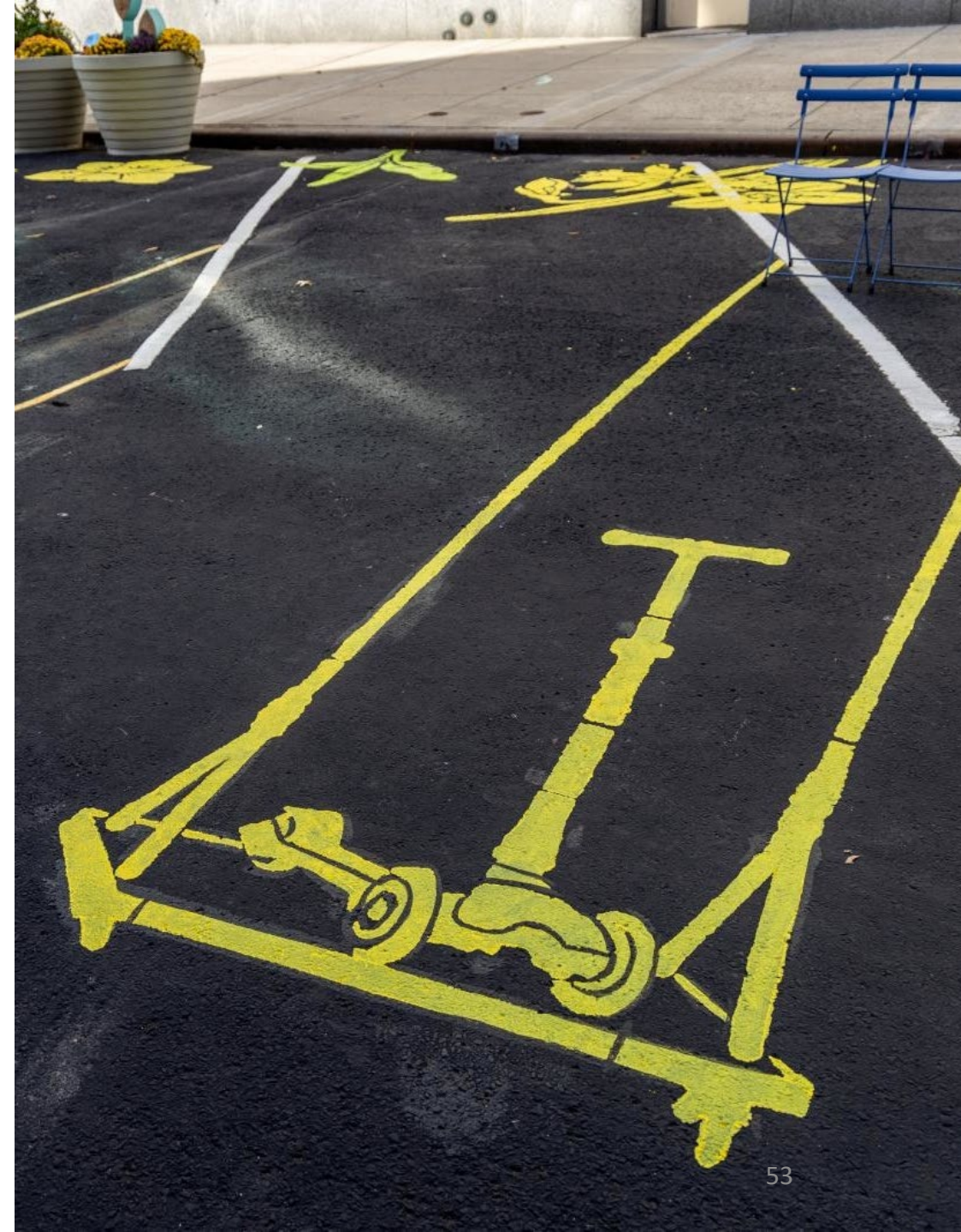
Talisa is a Dominican artist and feels a great sense of connection to the community of Washington Heights. She is already known by the community who has tapped her to paint a small shed in the area.

Next Steps

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Next Steps

- Plaza implementation begins in late September and will go into early October 2025
- Markings will go in first, followed by public art mural
- Amenities like planters, furniture, etc. will remain on site during implementation
- Post implementation outreach and evaluation through fall 2025 and into 2026
- Long-term maintenance by the Hort



Thank You!

Questions? Email openstreets@dot.nyc.gov



NYCDOT



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