

**POSITIVE DECLARATION
NOTICE OF INTENT
TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

PROJECT:

Brooklyn-Queens Expressway/Interstate
278 ("BQE") from Atlantic Avenue to
Nassau Street Project (BQE Central
Project)
Borough of Brooklyn
CEQR No.: 26DOT006K

LEAD AGENCY:

NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10041

DATE ISSUED:

October 2, 2026

TYPE OF ACTION:

Type I

NAME, LOCATION, AND DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:

Brooklyn-Queens Expressway/Interstate 278 ("BQE") from Atlantic Avenue to Nassau Street
Project (BQE Central Project)
Community Districts 2 and 6, Borough of Brooklyn (Kings County), New York

The New York City Department of Transportation (NYC DOT) is proposing the rehabilitation of the BQE from Atlantic Avenue to Nassau Street, in the Borough of Brooklyn ("BQE Central" or the "Project"). The purpose of the Project is to address identified structural deficiencies of BQE Central and maintain the regional vehicular connectivity and mobility that the highway provides. The Project involves an approximately 1.5-mile section of the BQE from just north of Atlantic Avenue to Nassau Street. The project limits include the BQE Central roadway, shoulders and offsets, support structures, Furman Street, the Brooklyn Heights Promenade, local street overpasses and underpasses between Atlantic Avenue and Nassau Street, and adjacent New York City-owned property, including parking lots, maintenance and storage areas, and open space. Within the project limits, the BQE parallels the eastern and southern shore of the East River through a densely developed urban area, with a wide range of land uses in proximity to the project limits.

BQE Central includes the unique 0.4-mile-long triple cantilever section. The structure takes advantage of an extreme change in elevation between the Brooklyn waterfront and Brooklyn Heights. It is composed of two levels of highway and the Brooklyn Heights Promenade on a structure elevated above Furman Street. The structure hangs from a retaining wall that

extends from ground level to the top of the bluff. The cantilever section begins at Joralemon Street just north of Atlantic Avenue and ends at Washington Street.

The Project would involve a major rehabilitation of all 21 structures within the project limits to address structural deficiencies and increase their service life. The New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has determined the portion of the BQE between Brooklyn Heights and the Kosciuszko Bridge to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NR-eligible). In addition, the Brooklyn Heights Promenade is within the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, which the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) has designated a New York City Landmark district; the district is also S/NR-listed. The Project would generally retain the historic integrity of the highway within the project limits, including the triple cantilever structure.

NYC DOT would replace the superstructure of the Columbia Heights overpass and relocate and reconstruct its north abutment. NYC DOT would rehabilitate all the other bridges and structures within the project limits to extend their service life. At the triple cantilever section, the Project would maintain the existing mainline and ramp alignments, lane widths, shoulder widths, horizontal and vertical clearances, and other roadway geometric features. With the Project, BQE Central would continue to operate as it does today, with two lanes in each direction except for a short section of the highway between the Manhattan Bridge and just south of Sands Street which operates with three full lanes in the Staten Island-bound direction only. East of Adams Street, NYC DOT would explore addressing non-standard features where practicable. The Project would correct current drainage issues and would provide a new bridge railing that meets current design standards.

The project limits include a portion of the property at 25 Joralemon Street. NYC DOT would acquire the portion of the property that is vacant and encased within the existing BQE structure. NYC DOT would not acquire the occupied portion of this structure that is immediately east of the BQE. The project limits also include small sections of mapped parkland adjacent to the roadway, which NYC DOT would incorporate through alienation legislation by the New York State legislature, including a home rule action by the New York City Council. The Project would require City Map amendments to account for these alterations to land use.

To fully rehabilitate the structure, NYC DOT would construct two temporary bypass structures alongside the current highway that would carry traffic during construction. One bypass structure would parallel the triple cantilever section from just north of Atlantic Avenue to Columbia Heights; this structure would be located within the Furman Street right-of-way below the promenade elevation. A second bypass structure would carry traffic from Columbia Heights, potentially above the Brooklyn Bridge, and through Dumbo, tying back into the highway structure just west of the Manhattan Bridge. Upon the completion of construction, NYC DOT would demolish both temporary structures.

NYC DOT anticipates that construction would commence in 2029 and would be completed before 2040. NYC DOT continues to develop the construction means and methods for the Project. As part of these efforts, NYC DOT will explore innovations aimed at shortening the duration of construction.

DISCRETIONARY ACTIONS SUBJECT TO CEQR AND SEQR

The following discretionary actions, permits, and approvals would be required to facilitate the Project:

CITY APPROVALS

1. City Planning Commission and City Council approvals pursuant to the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) to allow changes to the City Map, in coordination with the Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks)
2. Acquisition of real property, in coordination with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS)
3. Approval of City capital funds
4. Construction of public facilities, including coordination with NYC Parks and appropriate New York City agencies
5. City Council Home Rule Message for Parkland Alienation
6. Landmarks Preservation Commission review of projects within a New York City Historic District
7. Public Design Commission review of projects involving permanent structures, landscape architecture, and art on or over City-owned property
8. Unified Stormwater Rule, including NYC Department of Environmental Protection approval of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and Stormwater Construction Permit application
9. Permits from NYC DOT Office of Construction Mitigation and Coordination

STATE APPROVALS

1. New York State Legislature authorization for parkland alienation
2. Pursuant to Section 14.09 of the New York State Historic Preservation Act, an effect finding and execution of a Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of Agreement, if applicable, by the New York State Historic Preservation Office
3. A State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for construction activities on a site larger than one acre
4. A coastal zone consistency determination from the New York State Department of State, including consultation with the New York City Department of City Planning for consistency with New York City's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT EFFECT:

In accordance with Executive Order 91 of 1977, as amended, and the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review, found at Title 62, Chapter 5 of the Rules of the City of New York, NYC DOT has determined that the Project may have substantial effects on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, an EIS will be required to evaluate and disclose the extent to which impacts may occur. Aspects of the Project that may require evaluation of the potential environmental effects involve the following:

1. The potential for substantial effects related to open space;
2. The potential for substantial effects related to historic and cultural resources; and
3. The potential for substantial effects related to construction.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF DETERMINATION:

The above determination is based on the Project's location and the scope of the undertaking, and after careful consideration of the potential social, economic, and environmental effects of the Project, which finds that:

- 1) The Project may directly affect open space;
- 2) The Project may adversely affect historic and cultural resources; and
- 3) The Project, during construction, may adversely affect environmental resources including open space; shadows; historic and cultural resources; urban design and visual resources; natural resources; hazardous materials; transportation; air quality; greenhouse gas emissions and climate change; noise; and neighborhood character.

Accordingly, NYC DOT directs that a Draft EIS be prepared in accordance with 6 NYCRR 617.9(b) and Sections 6-08 and 6-09 of Executive Order No. 91 of 1977, as amended.

Additional information about the Project is available on the project website (www.nyc.gov/bqe). This website will include information on the EIS process, project activities and progress, public participation opportunities, and project contact information. Project documents will be available for download and review. The website will be kept up to date with information on the project alternatives, environmental review, and current and previous project documentation, and will provide a link to allow people to sign up for the mailing list and submit comments electronically. The website includes a section where visitors can sign up for the project mailing list (to be included in future mailings and email blasts) and a web form to submit their comments and questions. Instantaneous web-translation of the project website is available in multiple languages.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT a public scoping meeting will be held as detailed below for the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway/Interstate 278 ("BQE") from Atlantic Avenue to Nassau Street Project (BQE Central Project). The purpose of the scoping meeting will be to provide the public with the opportunity to comment on the draft scope of work to be used to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed BQE Central Project. The public is invited to comment on the proposed scope of analysis planned for the Draft EIS. A Draft Scope of Work has been prepared outlining analysis methodologies proposed for use in the Draft EIS.

In-person and virtual public scoping meetings have been scheduled at the times and locations listed below to provide a forum for public comments on the Draft Scope of Work.

If you need reasonable accommodation such as a sign language interpreter, foreign language assistance, or mobility assistance to participate in the meetings, please make a request using the contact information below. Requests must be submitted at least ten business days before the meetings and can also be requested through the virtual meeting registration.

- An in-person scoping meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 10, 2026**, from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM at New York City College of Technology, 300 Jay Street, Brooklyn, New York (register here: www.nyc.gov/bqe);
- A virtual scoping meeting will be held remotely on **Thursday, November 12, 2026**, from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM via Zoom (register here: www.nyc.gov/bqe).

Written comments will be accepted by the Lead Agency through the end of the day on **Monday, November 23, 2026**, and may be submitted at the public scoping meeting, or to the addresses below. Copies of the Environmental Assessment Statement, Positive Declaration, and Draft Scope of Work for the project may be obtained from the project website (www.nyc.gov/bqe). Comments may be provided by completing a comment form on the Project website at www.nyc.gov/bqe, by email to BQECentral@dot.nyc.gov, or via U.S. mail to the following address:

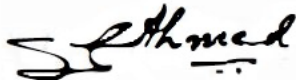
NYC Department of Transportation
Division of Bridges – BQE Central Project Team
Attention: Albert Silvestri
55 Water Street, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10041

This Notice of Public Meeting has been prepared pursuant to Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law (the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA)), its implementing regulations found at 6 NYCRR Part 617, and the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review found at 62 RCNY Chapter 5, and Mayoral Executive Order 91 of 1977, as amended (CEQR).

CEQR Number: 26DOT006K

SEQR Type: Type I

This Positive Declaration has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shakil Ahmed', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**[Shakil Ahmed, Senior Director, Office of Project Analysis & Environmental Review
Transportation Planning & Management/NYC DOT]**