



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Grand Army Plaza Gets Safety Upgrade

Pedestrian Islands and crosswalks, a Protected Bike Path and Plantings to be added

New York City Transportation Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan today announced that construction has begun at Grand Army Plaza on three large, landscaped pedestrian islands, five crosswalks and a protected bike path which will provide new safe connections for both pedestrians and cyclists. The new construction will also serve to better organize and keep vehicular traffic below the speed limit.

“Grand Army Plaza is much more than an entrance to Prospect Park and the confluence of several major roads, it is a destination in and of itself,” said Commissioner Sadik-Khan. “This new construction will provide a separated bike lane and safe crossing connections so that cyclists and pedestrians can easily access the arch, the fountain and the neighborhoods around the plaza.”

“I want to commend the DOT and Commissioner Sadik-Khan for making pedestrian safety a priority, and working to further ensure that visiting Grand Army Plaza is as safe as it is grand,” said Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz. “These pedestrian links, landscaped medians and protected bike lanes will mean Brooklynites and visitors can more freely enjoy Bailey Fountain and our iconic arch, as well gain smoother access to Prospect Park and the vibrant communities surrounding our borough’s signature plaza.”





“Ever since the beautiful Bailey Fountain was renovated by the Parks Department and the Prospect Park Alliance, more and more people have been drawn to Grand Army Plaza,” said Prospect Park Administrator, Tupper Thomas. “So it is wonderful that DOT, Parks and the community have cooperated on a project that makes it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to access and enjoy the Plaza.”

Working with the Grand Army Plaza Coalition and other community partners, the Department of Transportation (DOT) is adding the new landscaped pedestrian islands, crosswalks and bike path to create a safer environment for all those who use Grand Army Plaza. There will also be ten new pedestrian signals installed. This project makes it easier and more convenient to reach the recently refurbished Bailey Fountain and the Memorial Arch within the plaza. The new network of crosswalks and pedestrian signals stitch together the plaza, Prospect Park, the Brooklyn Public Library and the adjacent neighborhoods of Prospect Heights and Park Slope. The new bike path provides a key connection between the Prospect Park loop drive and the local streets of Brooklyn and DOT’s expanding bicycle network. DOT is exploring similar construction for the north side of the plaza.

Vehicular traffic will be slowed and better organized through the construction of the raised islands and the narrowing of some roads. There will be two lanes of traffic entering the plaza from westbound Eastern Parkway rather than the current three lanes, and Prospect Park drive will be reduced from three lanes to two as it enters the plaza. A dedicated right turn lane will be added to Prospect Park Drive for those wishing to reach Eastern Parkway or Flatbush Avenue. In all, the project converts 11,000 square feet of asphalt and street markings into space that is usable for pedestrians, cyclists and landscaping.

Construction on the project began after Labor Day and is expected to be complete by Thanksgiving. The project has a total cost of approximately \$400,000.

This project builds on DOT’s previous initiatives to improve conditions for all users in Grand Army Plaza and reduce the accident rate. Among numerous changes a new signal and marking plan was implemented in 2000 and a pedestrian island was enlarged and protected in 2003. Before 2001 there were, on average, 69 crashes per year. Since 2001, on average, there have been 20 accidents a year.