2023 Brooklyn Heights Survey: Future of the BQE

A history of activism

A focus on the future
Brooklyn Heights Association BQE Community Feedback Survey

Survey fielded in late April - early May 2023

Distributed through the BHA’s newsletter (~3,000 subscribers) and on BHA social media feeds (~4,000 followers IG/Twitter)

~500 (495) responses received

Future of the BQE Survey
Demographics

- 34% live in “Central Heights”
- 21% live in “North Heights”
- 16% live “Adjacent to the Promenade”
- 11.3% live in “South Heights”
- 7.3% live “Adjacent to the BQE”
- 4.6% live in CH, DUMBO, FFL, VH
Demographics – Age of Respondents

Please indicate your age range.

494 responses

- Under 16: 1 (0.2%)
- 16-25: 0 (0%)
- 25-34: 40 (8.1%)
- 35-44: 92 (18.6%)
- 45-54: 75 (15.2%)
- 55-64: 77 (15.6%)
- 65-74: 92 (18.6%)
- 75 or older: 75 (15.2%)
- I prefer not to say: 15 (3%)
Over half of the survey respondents did **NOT** attend DOT’s public workshops:

- 61.2% of respondents did not attend DOT’s BQE Central public workshops
- 32% attended one or more public meeting
### Overall Top Priorities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preserve the Promenade and respect the special scenic view plane zoning (SV1)</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bury the highway and/or maximize covering and tunneling as much as possible</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gasses</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize construction impact and timeline</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce traffic congestion on the BQE</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce or remove the highway</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian safety improvements on local streets</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create additional open/green space for public use</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide additional connection (s) to Brooklyn Bridge Park and the waterfront</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate vibrations from the cantilever</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use part or all of the BQE for public transportation</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Respondents were asked to select their top three priorities without ranking*
Agreement that the highway **should not** be enlarged

Nearly 70% of respondents agree that BQE Central **should not** be widened to accommodate 3 lanes of traffic in each direction.
67% strongly agree or agree that the city should make short-term safety repairs and develop a modern, sustainable plan for the entire BQE corridor.
Top Five Takeaways

1. Respondents want a smaller highway that maximizes capping and covering, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions and noise, while improving air quality.

“My main concern is taking city transportation into the right direction in the future...fewer cars, cleaner air, safer environments.”

2. A majority (67%) support making only the immediate repairs needed for safety reasons and taking the time necessary to plan for a holistic vision for the entire corridor.

“We should preserve what we have and decide on what the truly best option for the long term will be for our city at large, and the neighborhoods most directly impacted.”

3. Over 70% believe the highway should not be widened to restore six lanes of traffic.

“A bigger highway is completely unacceptable given the state of our planet’s climate and the need to improve our local air quality.”
Future of the BQE Survey

Top 5 Takeaways

4. Preserving the Historic Promenade is a top 3 priority for 66% of respondents, along with creating a new connection from the Promenade to the waterfront (67% in favor.)

“The Promenade and the Park below are widely used by Brooklynites of all ages, colors, and levels of wealth. That’s Brooklyn. Don’t destroy it.”

“The current scale of the Promenade admirably fits human beings for quiet activities, such as strolling, reading, viewing of the harbor and sky, photographing, conversing, courting. Bigger is not better.”

5. 60% support closing specific on and off ramps to improve pedestrian safety and reduce traffic on local streets.

“The northbound ramp from Atlantic Ave has become a nightmare for the neighborhood. There is constant gridlock and dangerous, rule-violating driving by drivers. It dangerous for everyone, drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.”

“BQE ramps to the Brooklyn & Manhattan Bridges should be CLOSED. This will encourage vehicle traffic to Manhattan to use the Battery Tunnel AND reduce traffic on the cantilever portion of the BQE.”
Future of the BQE Survey

- The construction plan, timeline, and costs.
- The impact on neighborhood streets and local parks – especially Brooklyn Bridge Park.
- The impact on the Promenade, including potential closures during construction.

More information is needed on virtually all aspects of DOT’s plans.