

<b>BOERUM HILL ASSOCIATION</b>	<b>PARK SLOPE CIVIC COUNCIL</b>
<b>OFFICE OF NYS SENATOR VELMANTTE MONTGOMERY</b> <b>OFFICE OF ASSEMBLYMAN HAKEEM JEFFRIES</b>	<b>PROSPECT HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL</b> <b>TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES</b>
<b>OFFICE OF NYC COUNCIL MEMBER LETITIA JAMES</b>	<b>TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN</b>

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## **ELECTED OFFICIALS AND LOCAL ADVOCATES CALL FOR COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION-LAND USE PLAN IN BROOKLYN GATEWAY AREA**

**BROOKLYN**—A group of elected officials, civic groups and advocates have come together to highlight Downtown Brooklyn’s transportation challenges. Population and transit ridership have skyrocketed over the last twenty years in Brooklyn, but New York City Department of Transportation and City Plan have yet to develop a plan to accommodate increased demand on the borough’s transportation infrastructure.

The groups, including the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, the Office of New York State Assemblymember and Congressman-elect Hakeem Jeffries, the Office of New York City Council Member Letitia James, Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council, Park Slope Civic Council, and the Boerum Hill Association, released a report, the “BK Gateway Vision: Planning for Now and the Next Generation of Downtown Brooklyn,” that lays out potential solutions to the transportation-land use challenges in the BK Gateway area. The area includes the downtown neighborhoods bounded by the East River, Nostrand Avenue, Empire Boulevard and 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

In recent years, the Gateway area has seen a surge in residential development, including the new Barclays Center arena, and has seen dramatic increases in transit ridership and has suffered hundreds of bicycle and pedestrian fatalities. The report lists a number of key recommendations to help accommodate growth, ease congestion and improve safety, including a parking management plan, targeted enhancements to subway and bus service, and an expanded traffic calming program. The report’s recommendations grew out of discussions with community boards and after a community planning meeting held last March that helped identify areas of concern within the Gateway area.

“Communities and businesses cannot develop or prosper without a well-developed infrastructure,” said New York City Council Member Letitia James. “BK Gateway holistic transportation plan addresses the changing landscape and provides a needed comprehensive vision for central and northern Brooklyn. I want to thank everyone who put their time and effort into this thoughtful and comprehensive plan. I look forward to working with city, state and federal elected officials on next steps”.

Since 1980, the population of Brooklyn has grown by nearly 300,000 people, or roughly 13%. According to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, subway ridership at selected stations within the BK Gateway Plan area has risen from as little as 2% to as much as nearly 30% from 2007-2011.

“Brooklyn always has been and always will be a borough in transition, drawing new residents from all over the world. We need a comprehensive transportation strategy for Brooklyn that creates livable streets, strong communities, and sustainable transportation. I commend these community organizations for pushing this cause forward.”

“Soaring residential density and an arena on Flatbush Avenue are having immediate impacts on the local street network and on transit that will only get worse with expected future development,” said Gib Veconi of the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council. “The City needs a holistic approach to transportation planning that’s scaled to meet the challenges before it.”

The recommendations include a call for revisiting ideas like congestion pricing and residential parking permits that would mitigate congestion in the Gateway area, as well as targeted transit infrastructure expansion like dedicated bus lanes along Flatbush Avenue and protected bike lanes along Atlantic Avenue.

"I thank and congratulate my fellow elected officials, but more importantly, all the civic groups involved in developing the BK Gateway plan," said New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery. "Through their efforts all of us in central and northern Brooklyn will be better prepared with a safe and efficient transportation system that will truly meet our increasing population's needs. I look forward to working with them all to make this plan a reality."

"We need to be prepared to tackle the current and future challenges of Brooklyn's growth," said Assemblyman-elect Walter Mosley, from Brooklyn's 57th district. "Due to the redevelopment of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the opening of the Barclays Arena, and new projects in downtown Brooklyn, our borough has faced unprecedented changes in the span of just a few short years. I applaud the Tri-State Transportation Campaign for putting forth constructive ideas to help thousands of affected commuters and residents, and urge the city's Department of Transportation to consider their proposals to make Brooklyn even safer and more efficient."

"The need to better plan for the increased growth in the BK Gateway area has never been clearer," said Veronica Vanterpool, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. "Population growth in Brooklyn has grown by 13% since 1980; a comprehensive transportation and land use plan will allow the most populous New York City borough to accommodate new residents while also protecting the quality of life of existing Brooklynites."

"Commercial and residential development in the Brooklyn Gateway area - Downtown Brooklyn and its surrounding communities - is proceeding at a pace not seen in many decades," said Michael Cairl, president of the Park Slope Civic Council. "The people, who live, work, shop, and go to schools, hospitals, and places of worship in this area create increasing demands on a transportation infrastructure that is aging and in places outmoded. Both foot and bicycle traffic have increased greatly and are fully a part of the transportation mix in our area. We need to accommodate and encourage these highly sustainable, low-impact modes of transportation, making them safe and accessible. It is time for the communities, their elected officials, transportation professionals, and advocates to produce a comprehensive survey of transportation in our area and safe, sustainable, affordable transportation. The Park Slope Civic Council is a longtime and effective advocate for livable streets and sound transportation and is proud to be part of the Brooklyn Gateway transportation initiative."

"Downtown Brooklyn is booming and local residents and businesses deserve a robust variety of transportation choices to meet their needs," said Paul Steely White, executive director of Transportation Alternatives.

"Investment in transportation infrastructure needs to keep pace with this diverse and growing community. Atlantic and Flatbush avenues are major transportation routes and need protected bike lanes and Select Bus Service so, no matter how people choose get around, they'll have a safe and speedy trip."

Ensuring that the conversation about the BK Gateway Plan will not end today, the groups also announced a panel discussion on the plan on January 26<sup>th</sup>.

A copy of the plan can be found online at [tstc.org/reports/Gateway\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](http://tstc.org/reports/Gateway_Report_Final.pdf) and community members can continue to provide input on the plan at Facebook.com on the BK Gateway Transportation Plan page.

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.