



Julio Pena III
Chairperson

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN
COMMUNITY BOARD #7

Jeremy Laufer
District Manager

Antonio Reynoso
Borough President

August 21, 2023

Ydanis Rodriguez
Commissioner
Department of Transportation
55 Water Street
New York, New York 10041

Dear Commissioner Rodriguez:

We are writing to you today concerning the "Great Streets" capital program in our community on 4th Avenue from 64th to 15th Streets and the condition of the concrete on this as yet to be completed project and several safety aspects of this project and its uncompleted predecessor. We are attaching several photographs of the conditions which we discuss in this letter, but they are by no means an exhaustive documentation of the poor quality of the work we have found.

The "Great Streets" plan has been a project this community has been expecting, in some form, for more than 25 years. The most recent iteration is a follow up to the partially completed 4th Avenue bike lanes which were installed in 2018. This capital program is replacing the uncompleted portion of the medians from the 2019-2020 MTA project which raised the subway grates along the middle of the medians. The current project is raising more of the median, adding locations for plantings and traffic lights and removing portions of the median at many intersections with turning lanes which will no longer leave a pedestrian island on this wide boulevard, creating a longer crossing for pedestrians at many locations.

The attached photos will show that while the project has not been completed, the concrete is filled with pock marks, cracks, discoloration, poor workmanship and chipped surfaces. It does not match the color of the MTA's concrete from their earlier project. We note that similar projects on West Street and uptown Broadway in Manhattan and on the northern section of Flatbush Avenue do not possess similar poor conditions more than a decade after they were built. We are greatly concerned that these poor conditions will lead to trip hazards, leaking, collapse and mud from the planters pouring into the street over a short period of time and once the additional weight of soil is placed within the planted areas.

Although we are not an affluent community, it is absolutely unacceptable that we should have to accept the poor aesthetics and potentially dangerous conditions of this project. These medians look terrible. We believe aging and weathering will make them even more so in a way that the aforementioned projects do not. We do not believe and will not accept patching and painting to cover over poor quality and believe the contractor should be required to return to the completed sections and redo the

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concrete. Please note that although we have sent a limited number of photos, these conditions exist on every block of this project.

There are also aspects of the project which we believe should be completed, as they were promised, or reconsidered in the interest of public safety:

- The removed portions of the medians, the pedestrian waiting areas, should be reinstalled. The longer pedestrian times create an additional burden on those who cannot move through the intersection quickly.
- If pedestrian islands cannot be installed, bollards should be placed along these locations to prevent the turning lanes from being used for illegally u-turns, as is often the case since the medians were removed. These u-turns occur after the driver passes a raised median, potentially making the driver blind to pedestrians in the crosswalk, which the vehicle is illegally moving through, until the last moment.
- Despite the Community Board asking that heavy bollards be installed along 4th Avenue medians many times over the past decade, only two at the northern part of the intersection at 54th Street have been installed to project the pedestrian island. They should be extended throughout the entire project.
- Pedestrian countdown clocks and leading pedestrian intervals should be installed at every intersection along this project.
- The bike lane should be completed, including concrete sidewalk expansions around Greenwood Cemetery and all local subway stations; concrete raised pedestrian areas with heavy bollards at intersections which act as daylighting for turning vehicles and bicyclists, some with trees/plantings; bollards protecting the bike lanes from the parking lanes; and appropriate "No Parking" signs on every block designating the daylighting areas which are currently ignored making the intersections more dangerous for those using the bike lanes.

We believe these improvements, most of which were promised to the community more than five years ago when the bike lanes were installed would go a long way to improving the safety of this dangerous and heavily used corridor.

The contractor or his replacement should be required to return to every block and replace, not cover over, the poor-quality work which had previously been installed. Our District Manager and members of our Transportation Committee would be happy to walk the entire length of the corridor with you or your designees to point out all of these conditions.

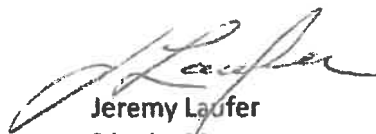
Again, our residents should not have to accept these unsafe conditions and poor aesthetics that other communities do not have to endure in order to have a truly "Great Street" design.

We eagerly anticipate your response.

Sincerely,



Julio Pena III
Chairperson



Jeremy Laufer
District Manager

Cc: Hon. Jumanne Williams, Public Advocate
Hon. Brad Lander, Comptroller
Hon. Antonio Reynoso, Borough President
Hon. Dan Goldman, Congressman
Hon. Andrew Gounardes, NYS Senator
Hon. Marcela Mitaynes, NYS Assemblymember
Hon. Alexa Aviles, Councilmember
Keith Bray, Borough Commissioner, Department of Transportation
Emily Riquelme-Beaufort, Department of Transportation
Eric McClure, Chairperson, Community Board 6/Brooklyn
Michael Racioppo, District Manager, Community Board 6/Brooklyn



