



May 5, 2022

Ydanis Rodriguez  
Commissioner  
New York City Department of Transportation  
55 Water Street, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10041

Keith Bray  
Brooklyn Borough Commissioner  
New York City Department of Transportation  
16 Court Street, #1620  
Brooklyn, NY 11241

Commissioner Rodriguez & Commissioner Bray:

We are writing to urge you to immediately conduct a comprehensive traffic study of Grand Army Plaza — particularly around Plaza Street ring road and its intersections — to address traffic safety concerns, pedestrian safety, and bike safety.

As you know, the area surrounding Grand Army Plaza — the main entrance to Prospect Park and a key artery for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers — is home to more than 1,500 residents that reside in 900 apartments. Yet the area is in a state of disrepair — defined by endless traffic, poor sidewalk conditions, broken benches, and overflowing trash cans and litter. Our offices have received multiple calls and emails in recent months about injuries resulting from the poor conditions. Notably, the site has seen numerous pedestrian injuries and crashes in recent years, including a 2021 incident in which a woman and her 1-year-old son were hit by a car at the intersection of Plaza Street West and Berkeley Place. In the past five years, 89 people have been injured at Grand Army Plaza, including 19 cyclists and 12 pedestrians.

In recent years, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has shown it is dedicated to investing in making improvements to Grand Army Plaza, one of the most iconic and important areas of our districts. The 2011 traffic redesign resulted in crucial improvements to traffic flow and pedestrian and bike safety. Seven years later, then-Mayor Bill de Blasio announced the allocation of nearly \$9 million in capital funding to refurbish the arch, fix pavers, replant the berms, and replace the fence. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic halted the construction.

Yet the call for safety improvements around Grand Army Plaza has only continued. A 2019 survey showed that local residents were most concerned with traffic volume and noise. Local



community groups have since raised the alarm regarding traffic safety issues and urged DOT to make initial improvements, including but not limited to installing two speed bumps on Plaza Street East, protected bike infrastructure, and harmonizing walk signals along Eastern Parkway and Plaza Street East.

**We urge you to begin this study immediately and to provide immediate interventions, including the aforementioned improvements that local community groups have suggested and expediting changes that can be made without funding. We also urge you to address improvements to the surrounding area, including replacing broken benches, mending fencing, clearing out berms of dead trees, filling empty tree pits, and fixing broken sidewalks. We request support conducting the necessary agency coordination to address the scope of complaints.**

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact our offices at [District35@council.nyc.gov](mailto:District35@council.nyc.gov) (CM Hudson) or [District39@council.nyc.gov](mailto:District39@council.nyc.gov) (CM Hanif). We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Crystal Hudson  
Council Member, District 35

Shahana Hanif  
Council Member, District 39

cc: Hon. Antonio Reynoso, Brooklyn Borough President  
Daniel Abramson, Office of the Brooklyn Borough President  
Peter Fleming, Brooklyn Community Board 6  
Glenn Kelly, Brooklyn Community Board 6  
Irsa Weatherspoon, Brooklyn Community Board 8  
Glinda Andrews, Brooklyn Community Board 8  
Deborah Kirschner, Prospect Park Alliance  
Andrew Saunders, Plaza Street Block Association  
Timothy Gilles, Park Slope Civic Council  
Kenneth Stevens, Park Slope Civic Council  
Dr. Saskia Haegens, Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council  
Gib Veconi, Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council