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CIVIC AND BUSINESS LEADERS SUPPORT THE BROOKLYN-QUEENS CONNECTOR

Mayor de Blasio's proposal for the "BQX" garners support from key stakeholders on the ground in neighborhoods along the Brooklyn-Queens waterfront and advocates for new citywide transportation solutions

Bill Rudin, Chairman of the Association for a Better New York, said, "Creating a north-south connection along the Queens and Brooklyn waterfront will provide a vital mass transportation service, and will reconnect neighborhoods that haven't had a rail options since the days of the trolley cars. The BQX is a bold and visionary plan and the de Blasio Administration should be applauded for their leadership and investment in our city's infrastructure."

Kathryn Wylde, President and CEO of the Partnership for New York City, said, "The transit connector between Brooklyn and Queens is a forward-thinking investment in the city's future that captures the value of our appreciating land values for the benefit of all New Yorkers."

Tucker Reed, President of the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, said, "We're seeing pockets of unprecedented job and housing growth along the Brooklyn-Queens waterfront in areas like Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island City. The BQX can be the catalyst to extend that opportunity to tens of thousands of New Yorkers in many more neighborhoods."

Carlo Scissura, President of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, said, "As Brooklyn has grown and becomes a world-class place to live and work, our infrastructure has not kept up. Now Mayor de Blasio has proposed a world-class transit option that will drive sustainable economic growth and deliver tens of thousands of jobs. It's a vision we whole-heartedly support."

Michelle de la Uz, Fifth Avenue Committee, said, "The people of South Brooklyn have been shut out of the city's overall economic growth because we don't have quick or reliable access to transportation. This streetcar could help to create equity, more livable communities, and provide opportunities for people and businesses alike to thrive."

Jill Eisenhard, President of Red Hook Initiative, said, "At the Red Hook Initiative we know how desperately the thousands of young people we work with need access to good jobs. Mayor de Blasio's streetcar plan addresses that problem head on by connecting our community to thousands of job opportunities along the waterfront, significantly improving the quality of life for Red Hook residents."

Elizabeth Lusskin, Long Island City Partnership, said, "There is no question that improved north-south transportation along the waterfront both within Queens and between Queens and Brooklyn is very much needed for the economic and cultural vitality of Long Island City, its residents and businesses, and we applaud the Mayor for proposing a visionary solution and look forward to participating in the community process going forward."

Jukay Hsu, Founder and Executive Director of Coalition for Queens, said, "The Brooklyn-Queens Connector is a much-needed transformative initiative that serves the patterns of travel and work for today's New York City. This new railway will also further catalyze the economic boon along the waterfront and open up opportunities for new jobs and businesses. We applaud the Mayor for his vision, and I'm proud to support this innovative transportation option for our great city."

Jonathan Bowles, Center for an Urban Future, said, "In recent years, the Brooklyn and Queens waterfront has been transformed into New York's greatest opportunity zone, teeming with innovative new companies that are creating loads of new jobs. But while so many more New Yorkers are working and living in communities from Astoria to Sunset Park, transportation connectivity has lagged well behind. That's why I'm so excited about Mayor de Blasio's proposal for a streetcar line connecting the Brooklyn and Queens waterfronts."

Leslie Griesbach Schultz, BRIC, said, "It is beyond exciting to learn of Mayor de Blasio's vision for addressing public transportation needs in our very changed city. The streetcar project will be a powerfully transformative one, eliminating barriers between communities and creating the potential for enormous new synergies. As a borough-wide cultural institution that is headquartered in Downtown Brooklyn, this project will enable BRIC to connect with neighborhoods, artists, and communities in ways that are currently not possible."

Peter Madonia, Chief Operating Officer of The Rockefeller Foundation, said, "Our legacy transportation infrastructure simply isn't built to handle so many of today's challenges, from the need for greater resilience to more inclusive economies. The BQX is exactly the kind of investment New York City should be making to deliver multiple wins with one investment including greater transit capacity, more diverse economic opportunities and ensuring more people can access opportunity far into the future."

Tupper Thomas, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Parks, said, "As our city grows and changes, it's more important than ever for all New Yorkers to have access to open spaces. Mayor de Blasio's streetcar opens up the revitalized waterfronts of Brooklyn and Queens to the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who live and work on the proposed line and the millions of New Yorkers looking to take advantage of our great parks."

Roland Lewis, President and CEO of Waterfront Alliance, said, "The growth of waterfront development up and down the East River, including affordable housing and new job centers, presents a transportation challenge for our city. The de Blasio Administration's answer to establish the Citywide Ferry Service was an important first step, starting next year, to address the needs of these communities. The establishment of the BQX light rail is a great compliment to the ferries that together will ease tough commutes, support economic development and further enliven these waterfront neighborhoods."

David Ehrenberg, President of Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation, said, "'BQX is a creative solution to a challenge faced in Brooklyn, and in other great urban centers around the world – linking workforce to economic hubs through new, energy efficient mass transit systems. The phenomenal growth underway at Brooklyn Navy Yard will greatly benefit from the Connector."

Ashley Cotton, Chair of the MetroTech Business Improvement District, said, "Access to transit is a key factor in the success of any urban area, which makes today's announcement by Mayor de Blasio on the proposed Brooklyn-Queens Connector such welcome news for the continued development of Downtown Brooklyn and its central business district at MetroTech Center. We look forward to working with the administration to turn this vision into reality and help support this area as a center for innovation."

Downtown Brooklyn Partnership co-Chairs MaryAnne Gilmartin and Bre Pettis said, "Today's announcement by Mayor de Blasio on a potential Brooklyn-Queens Connector cements the legacy of innovation that has been present in Brooklyn since the 1800s and was recently revitalized in our efforts to grow and support the Brooklyn Tech Triangle. People want to live, work and play in Brooklyn, and the creation of a

streetcar transportation system would enable them to do so with more ease and help unlock economic potential up and down the East River waterfront.”

Albert Laboz, Chair of the Fulton Mall Improvement Association, said, “Our efforts to grow the innovation economy in the Brooklyn Tech Triangle just got a major boost from Mayor de Blasio’s proposal for a streetcar along the Brooklyn-Queens waterfront. Transit access has always been a hallmark of Downtown Brooklyn, and we look forward to working to ensure this continues for the future.”

Ramon Peguero, Executive Director of Southside United HDFC, said, “Our community has lacked proper transportation connecting the waterfront to Queens and we welcome Mayor de Blasio’s streetcar plan, which would increase economic activity in this area. Local businesses will certainly see an increase in visitors, and local residents will reap the benefit of having a reliable transit system nearby.”

Alexandria Sica, DUMBO Improvement District, said, "This is exactly the kind of game changing project the outer boroughs need. With major employers like Etsy, Hugel and West Elm, DUMBO and many other neighborhoods along the waterfront are driving an ever-increasing share of the New York economy. We need an outer borough-centric transit network to support that growth, and that's exactly what we're getting here. The streetcar is going to be a major recruiting tool for our companies."

Meghan French, Cornell Tech, said, "Cornell Tech applauds Mayor de Blasio for his vision for The Brooklyn Queens Connector. Next summer, hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and several tech companies will move to our campus on Roosevelt Island, and we expect tech sector growth across the river into Queens and beyond. The streetcar will significantly improve much needed connections between the tech hubs in Queens and Brooklyn, and to our campus."

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