



March 1, 2022

Dear Mayor Eric Adams and DOT Commissioner Ydanis Rodríguez,

We are a coalition of volunteer activists, community leaders, and neighbors concerned with the condition of the Grand Street bike lane. Over the past few years we have seen much progress in this city towards creating more open, equitable spaces and improving transportation options that prioritize all people. However, there are critical pieces still needed to create a truly safe network of bike lane infrastructure in New York City. Today, we are urging you to take an important first step by fixing the beleaguered Grand Street bike lane, as part of your ongoing efforts to improve bike lanes across the five boroughs.

The Grand Street bike lane is one of the first of its kind in North Brooklyn, implemented along a vital east-west corridor. This is the product of years of community meetings and workshops, in response to the deaths of Matt von Ohlen and Rafael Nieves. This has been a community-driven process from the start with the potential to transform this busy, dangerous route into a safe, reliable thoroughfare for people on bikes. However, since 2019, the year of its full implementation, there have been 67 cyclist injuries along this “protected” path with a total of 196 crashes across all modes of transportation. It is not a safe street for anyone, let alone a protected bike lane.

From day one, the Grand Street bike lane has failed to keep people safe. During visioning sessions, the community requested safety and transportation improvements, including protective jersey barriers, dedicated loading zones, and a dedicated bus lane along Grand Street extending over the Williamsburg Bridge, none of which were implemented. The implemented plastic delineators have not prevented vehicles or dumpsters from blocking the bike lanes. Illegal double parking in the bike lane creates a dangerous situation for both cyclists and motorists. During the planning process, DOT expressed concerns that maintenance equipment would not fit in a bike lane with jersey barriers. However, DOT has been deploying properly-sized equipment in the neighborhood along Franklin and Kent, as well as on the Brooklyn Bridge. DOT recently resurfaced the street and neglected to correct the mistakes with the original implementation. We knew the omission of protective jersey barriers would lead to dangerous conditions back in 2019 and we have witnessed that prediction come tragically true throughout 2021.

A truly protected Grand Street bike lane will encourage cycling and be good for business. According to an annual DOT report, [Cycling in the City](#), cycle rates recorded at locations such as the Pulaski Bridge, the Kent Avenue bike lane, and the Williamsburg Bridge grew about 33% year over year from 2019 to 2020. That’s an additional 1.8 *million trips* citywide. On



Eighth and Ninth Avenues in Manhattan, the installation of protected bike lanes and safer crosswalks led to a [49 percent increase](#) in sales for local businesses. A safe and well organized street, comprehensively planned, and with numerous and properly sited loading zones is a necessity for our businesses and the community.

The Grand Street bike lane has the potential to be an essential link between communities, but it needs protective jersey barricades and measures taken at each intersection to stop cars from entering the protected bike lane. Otherwise, it's only a matter of time before the next preventable death.

The commitment to add further protections to our bike lanes citywide is long overdue. We hope you will start this vital work in North Brooklyn — delivering on a truly safe corridor for all — by fixing the Grand Street bike lane.

Signed,

Juan Serra and Kevin Costa, co-chairs, North Brooklyn Transportation Alternatives Activist Committee

State Senator Julia Salazar

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher

Borough President Antonio Reynoso

Councilmember Lincoln Restler

Councilmember Jennifer Gutierrez

District Leader Emile Bazile

District Leader Kristina Naplatarski

District Leader Samy Nemir Olivares