



A Memorandum for District 4
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Proposed Brookdale Sanitation Garage

The New York City Department of Sanitation's plan to construct a garage to house over 150 sanitation trucks and street sweepers on the site of the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing (located on 1st Avenue, between 25th and 26th Streets) has understandably upset many District 4 residents. The Department of Sanitation has argued that without this new location, sanitation workers will continue to make inefficient trips across the city, causing increased wear and tear on the equipment.¹ Many community members, however, are dismayed by the lack of input the public has had in the planning process. They believe there are better solutions and more suitable initiatives that should be considered before undertaking the costly construction of a new garage.

One serious concern about the proposal for the garage is that it lacks a comprehensive plan for the whole block. This is particularly worrisome to Waterside Plaza residents who use 25th Street as a main pedestrian corridor from the pedestrian bridge over FDR Drive to buses and transportation on 1st Avenue. As currently planned, this block of 25th Street will be the back of the sanitation garage, perhaps a windowless brick wall along the sidewalk, which will make walking alone at night an unpleasant and potentially dangerous experience.

¹ Brookdale. New York City Economic Development Corporation, 12 Sept. 2016. Web.
<https://www.nycedc.com/project/brookdale>

Additionally, if the plan for the garage moves forward, the proposal must include a plan to widen 26th Street in order to accommodate the influx of garbage trucks from the FDR drive, as well as traffic from Waterside Plaza's access road and the trucks from the adjacent firehouse. This would be the least-worst option, rather than having the trucks approach the garage from 1st Avenue, which would be a safety hazard for the families and children at the nearby schools and parks.

Finally, the current proposal states that trucks would be returning to the sanitation garage empty, except "in the case of an emergency."² Sanitation emergencies should be defined to the fullest extent to ensure that an "emergency" is not interpreted as a traffic jam that will require sanitation employees to work overtime if they do not return immediately to the Brookdale Garage.

In light of these concerns, Manhattan Community Board 6 and consulting firm BFJ Planning have proposed either creating more green space or constructing a garage partially underground with the above-ground space dedicated to affordable housing, senior housing, or health-related projects.³ Although both ideas are improvements on the department's plan, the latter option satisfies both the need for space for sanitation equipment while responding to the needs and desires of the community. When I am elected to the City Council, I will advocate for comprehensive planning of this entire block, prioritizing community input and perspective.

² Brookdale. New York City Economic Development Corporation, 12 Sept. 2016. Web. <https://www.nycedc.com/project/brookdale>

³Community Board 6 Land Use Committee. Brookdale Site. New York City Economic Development Corporation and, 4 Feb. 2015. Web. https://www.nycedc.com/sites/default/files/filemanager/Projects/Brookdale/CB6_land_use_comm_PPT_presentation.pdf