

Transcript: Mayor Eric Adams Announces "Clean Curbs" Waste Containerization Pilot Expansion to All Five Boroughs

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Deputy Mayor Meera Joshi, Operations: I'm thrilled today to announce another one of our Earth Week events. My name is Meera Joshi. I'm deputy mayor for operations for New York City. I'm here along with our Mayor Eric Adams, right behind me, as well as our Deputy Mayor for Economic and Workforce Development Maria Torres-Springer, our Sanitation Commissioner Jessica Tisch, our Small Business Services Commissioner Kevin Kim, Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez, our Chief Climate Officer and the Commissioner for the Department of Environmental Protection Rit Aggarwala, State Senator Brad Hoylman, and many of our council members, including Council Member Sandy Nurse, Council Members Gale Brewer, Erik Bottcher and Keith Powers. And of course our Times Square Alliance President Tom Harris. Thank you to all of them for your contributions to get to today.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Today's announcement is a concrete step from the Adams administration on keeping our public space clean, clear, and accessible. And today it's literally about containing the litter, the litter that pedestrians leave in litter baskets, and especially in this dense area that overflows time and time again daily that now can be contained in the containerization equipment that you see right next to me. I'm going to turn it over now to our Mayor Eric Adams.

Mayor Eric Adams: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much. And we are not here just simply to talk trash. Out of all of our announcements and conferences, this has generated so much energy from those who are in government, out of government. We want a clean, safe New York. That's important to us. And I was amazed at how many people are coming together around this issue. We all know that cleanliness is next to godliness, and we want to thank our collaborations of our electeds, our commissioners. They see this as an important initiative on behalf of our city. And we also want to really welcome our new DSNY commissioner here with us, Commissioner Tisch, thank you for

being here with us as well and on joining our amazing team. It's great to celebrate Earth Week. We have been doing this throughout the week to really lean into the environmental justice and we know environmental justice begins on the street level.

Mayor Adams: It starts in our streets and how we treat our community. No matter where I go, I hear the complaints over and over again, loud and clear. New Yorkers, you want clean streets. You want trash off our sidewalks. You are tired of the rodents. You're tired of the smell. You're tired of seeing food, waste and spillage. You want clean, safe streets, and we heard you. And clean streets are vital to our neighborhoods, ensuring vitality exists in our city. You want to easily move throughout your city, you want it to be safe and healthy to get around. Today we're announcing the Clean Curb pilot to all five boroughs. All five boroughs will have some semblance of these beautiful containers in their community. We want to stop the dodging of black bags and rats and spillage. That's the goal as we move throughout our city. Instead, we'll be testing container models throughout the city.

Mayor Adams: They're impressive, they're clean, they're out of the way. And containers will reduce some of the problems that we have when you see the black bags all over the city. They will ensure our streetscapes are as beautiful as the people who walk on the street. That's who New Yorkers are. We're going to take back the space while citizens often—pedestrian spaces are used to hold many of these garbage bags. You see them all the time. And I know you're frustrated about them as we are. The container you see here today was installed by the Times Square Alliance. Thank you so much for that. It hides and secures the black bags that you normally see on our streets. Just look at this block and how having this container here, it just beautifies the entire block that's here. How many of you are tourists? Who's a tourist?

Mayor Adams: Who's a tourist here? Visiting from somewhere. Don't you like this better? Love it. Love it. And so we are going to install similar containers in neighborhoods across the city, and it's going to really help in our goal and mission to send the right message of our city's a clean, safe place to be. As we move into spring and into summer, it's imperative to get this initiative underway. And so I cannot thank all those who are involved from just about all of our agencies, DEP, Small Business Services, Department of Sanitation, both deputy mayors, Maria Torres-Springer, and Deputy Mayor Joshi, Meera, just the whole team. We have all come together to state that this is a top priority for us to create a clean, safe city. Thank you, deputy mayor and the entire team, thank all of you.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you, mayor.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you, Mayor Adams. I just want to give you a few details. This is an investment of \$1.3 million that we're making across the city. And the key component here is it's in partnership with commercial neighborhoods and residential neighborhoods. This is a product of a partnership with the Times Square Alliance. We'll be working with BIDs across the city. They'll be choosing what works for their neighborhood based on their neighborhood needs. The Times Square Alliance has a particular problem, you can see it demonstrated here with the before and after. Litter from litter baskets is bagged and lumped together several times a day because of the number of people that come through this neighborhood. And what you see at the end of the day is what you have on your right or left, depending on where you're standing. And on the other side is what it'll look like going forward.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: It's really about containing the trash and it seems like a simple thing and we should all be easily understandable of it, but it makes a huge difference in the quality of life and the experience that visitors and residents have when they walk down the streets. I really want to thank all of our partners in this effort because we can always buy equipment, we can always get the technology, but it's the cultural change that starts with the community that makes the real difference. And without both ingredients, we can't make our streets cleaner. So thank you very much. I do want to turn it over now to some of our elected officials, but before I do that, my partner in crime, Maria Torres-Springer, deputy mayor for economic development and workforce development.

Deputy Mayor Maria Torres-Springer, Economic Development and Workforce Development: Thank you. Thank you, Deputy Mayor Joshi. Good afternoon everyone and hello to Times Square. We're so excited to be here. So many colleagues in government, so many colleagues in elected office, and it's appropriate that we do it here in Times Square with all of the partners that we have. We know the important role that business improvement districts, that community based organizations play in our city, in stewarding the public realm and enlivening our commercial districts. And that's why when the mayor announced his economic recovery plan just a few weeks ago, we really put front and center our commercial districts and our business improvement district partners. Now the mayor from day one has said that we have to break down the silos of government. We have to really take a whole of government approach to all of our city's challenges, including keeping our streets and curbs clean and safe and today is a perfect example of that.

Deputy Mayor Torres-Springer: We are taking a very big step with an innovative solution to clean up our streets and public spaces. And cleaner streets of course mean safe streets for pedestrians, shoppers, tourists, everyday New Yorkers. And it means a better commercial environment for our small business owners throughout the five boroughs. Today's just a start. We're really getting stuff done with the Times Square Alliance and with so many partners. And as the deputy mayor mentioned, we are bringing this to all five boroughs and are going to work collaboratively with partners on the ground. Just the first in the many ways we are really envisioning, re-envisioning our public realm to ensure that it's safe, welcoming, and attractive to all. Thanks to everyone and special thanks to our amazing Deputy Mayor for Operations Joshi. Back to you.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you. Next, we're going to hear from State Senator Brad Hoylman.

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Deputy Mayor Joshi: Some good one-liners. Okay. Next, our chair of the sanitation committee for the City Council, Council Member Sandy Nurse.

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Mayor Adams: Thank you.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you. Next is a Council Member Gale Brewer.

[...]

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Okay. Next, Council Member Erik Bottcher.

[...]

Mayor Adams: Well said, brother. Well said.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you. Next we'll hear from Council Member Keith Powers.

Mayor Adams: Power in the house.

[...]

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you. Now I'd like to bring on, and that was a good segue, the energy that's going to fuel solving some of those intractable problems, our new Commissioner for Sanitation Jessica Tisch, who's had a great first week and it's only Wednesday.

Commissioner Jessica Tisch, Department of Sanitation: Thank you, Mayor Adams. Thank you Deputy Mayor Joshi. And thank you to the Times Square Alliance for hosting the very first Clean Curbs bins. These sealed containers are in a spot where bags of litter basket waste used to sit on the curb for hours, providing a free all you can eat buffet for rats. We've talked about wanting to change this for years and now we're announcing new of funds to test our Clean Curbs containers in all five boroughs, whether residential, commercial or litter basket trash, we want to find out what works, what doesn't, and finally give New Yorkers the clean curbs that they deserve. I look forward to announcing more containerization projects in the months ahead. Thank you very much.

Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you. And we're going to close with the man who made this possible, in addition to our mayor who made this possible, the leader of the Times Square Alliance, Tom Harris. Thank you.

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Deputy Mayor Joshi: Thank you very much, everyone. We made all this trash together, so we'll clean it up together in future public private partnerships throughout the city. Thank you.

Mayor Adams: Thank you all.