

BUSHWICK SANITATION REPORT

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MEET THE AUTHOR

D'Shandi is a Master of Urban Planning student at New York University with a focus on Community Development and Climate Resilience. D'Shandi received her Bachelor's in Economics from Baruch College, where she focused on Economic Development and Black studies.

Using her skills as an NYC educator coupled with the knowledge gained from Wagner, D'Shandi aspires to work with communities to create emergency management mitigation strategies that are climate change resilient, creative, and sustainable.

D'Shandi looks forward to engaging with community partners to ensure that the needs of those most vulnerable are put at the forefront of every decision-making process.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a comprehensive urban sanitation plan for Community Board 4, the north Brooklyn neighborhood of Bushwick. The plan focuses on street vendors, DSNY garbage collection, and other relevant factors affecting the sanitation conditions in Bushwick. The report includes a cleanliness rubric that Community Board 4 Brooklyn can use to analyze the cleanliness of neighborhood streets, data visualizations to provide a visual representation of the sanitation conditions, and neighborhood photos to provide a visual representation of the current conditions. The report concludes with actionable next steps that the Community Board can take to improve the sanitation conditions in Community District 4 Brooklyn, Bushwick.

Methodology

The report was conducted through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Beginning with data collected from public records, field observations, and other sources. Followed by a comparative data analysis of pre and post-Covid sanitation conditions in Bushwick.

The analysis included street cleaning schedules, garbage collection routes, and other relevant factors. Finally, an on-site inspection of several streets and public spaces in the neighborhood is included with recordings of observations on street trash, rat sightings, catch bins, tree pits, rain gardens, vandalism, and other relevant categories.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Bushwick is a neighborhood in the northern part of Brooklyn, New York City. The neighborhood has a rich history dating back to the early 17th century when the Dutch settled it. In the centuries that followed, Bushwick has undergone numerous transformations, reflecting the city's changing demographics and economic conditions as a whole.

One of the defining characteristics of Bushwick's history has been its access to public services. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Bushwick was a hub of manufacturing and industry, with many residents working in factories and warehouses in the area. As the neighborhood's population grew, so did the demand for public services such as schools, hospitals, and transportation. In the mid-20th century, Bushwick saw an increase in public housing constructed, intending to provide affordable housing for low-income residents.

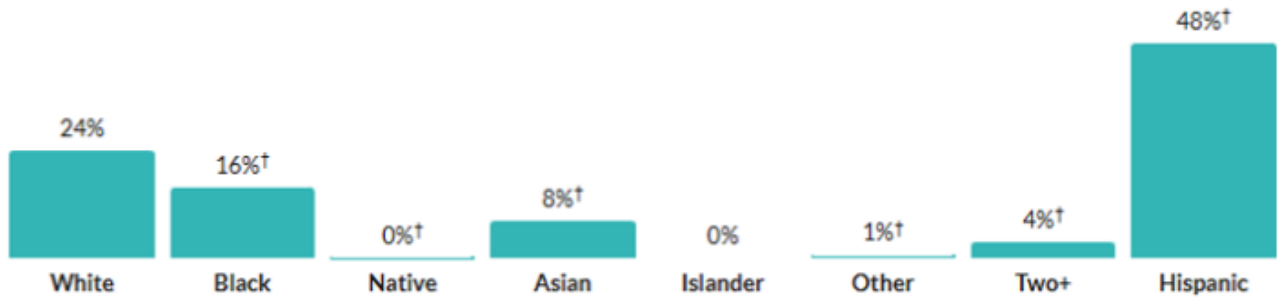
Over the years, Bushwick has also faced challenges related to crime. Like many neighborhoods in New York City, Bushwick experiences periods of high crime rates, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s when the city was facing a widespread crime wave. However, in recent decades, crime rates in Bushwick have declined significantly, and the neighborhood has become safer and more desirable as a place to live.

The demographic makeup of Bushwick has changed significantly over the years. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the neighborhood was predominantly white and working-class. However, beginning in the mid-20th century, Bushwick saw an influx of immigrants from Latin America, particularly Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Today, Bushwick is a diverse neighborhood with a large Hispanic population and significant numbers of African Americans, whites, and Asian Americans.



Bushwick remains a vibrant and dynamic community with a rich cultural history and a diverse mix of residents.

Race & Ethnicity



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2021). American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

Bushwick remains a vibrant and dynamic community with a rich cultural history and a diverse mix of residents. The neighborhood houses numerous small businesses, cultural institutions, and community organizations. Bushwick is a vital part of the fabric of Brooklyn and New York City.

PROBLEM OVERVIEW

One of the main issues Bushwick faces is the management of solid waste. Like other neighborhoods in New York City, Bushwick generates a large amount of waste, and the proper collection and disposal of this waste is essential for maintaining clean and healthy living conditions.



01 — DSNY Garbage Collection Frequency

From January 1st to December 31st, 2021, there were 1,203 complaints about garbage and litter in Bushwick. Additionally, according to data from the NYC 311 service request database, there were an estimated 2,500 sanitation incidents reported in Bushwick in 2018.



02 — Illegal Dumping

According to data from the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), there were 6,923 complaints about illegal dumping in Bushwick in 2020 alone.



03 — Street Vendor Density

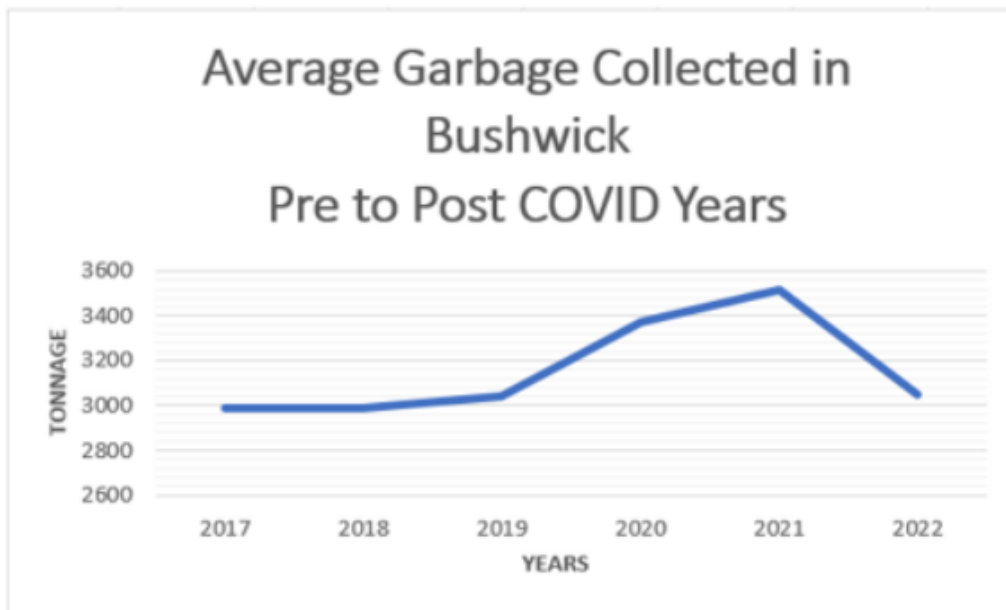
In 2015, there were 2,907 food vending permits issued in Brooklyn, while in 2019, the number had risen to 3,573, an increase of over 20%.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

Community District 4 - Bushwick is a neighborhood in the northern part of Brooklyn, New York City. According to data from the New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY), Bushwick has a population of approximately 116,000 people and covers an area of approximately 2.3 square miles.

One of the main issues Bushwick faces is the management of solid waste. Like other neighborhoods in New York City, Bushwick generates a large amount of waste, and the proper collection and disposal of this waste is essential for maintaining clean and healthy living conditions.

The 19th and early 20th centuries, Bushwick was a hub of manufacturing and industry. The disposal of industrial waste was a significant concern. In the mid-20th century, the construction of public housing in Bushwick led to an increase in the amount of residential waste generated. As stated in Community Board 4's 2023 Statement of District Needs, residents are concerned about a perceived decrease in garbage pickup in the neighborhood. See Figure below. The DSNY is responsible for keeping the city clean and healthy by "collecting, recycling, and disposing of waste, cleaning streets, and attacking the scourge of illegal dumping". In Bushwick, the DSNY provides regular garbage, recycling, and organics collection services.



Source: NYC Open Data

Data from 311, New York City's Non-emergency service hotline, shows that Bushwick residents have complained about sanitation issues in the neighborhood. From January 1st to December 31st, 2021, there were 1,203 complaints about garbage and litter in Bushwick. The data includes complaints about overflowing garbage bins, abandoned furniture, and illegally dumped waste. There have also been concerns about an increase in the number of rodents, including rats and mice, in Bushwick. 311 data shows that there were a total of 623 complaints about rodents in Bushwick during the same time. Rodents can pose a public health risk as they can carry and spread diseases.

To address these issues, the DSNY has implemented several initiatives in Bushwick, including the use of rat-resistant garbage bins and the deployment of rodent control teams to areas with high levels of rodent activity. The DSNY has also worked with community organizations and local businesses to educate residents about proper waste disposal and rodent prevention techniques.



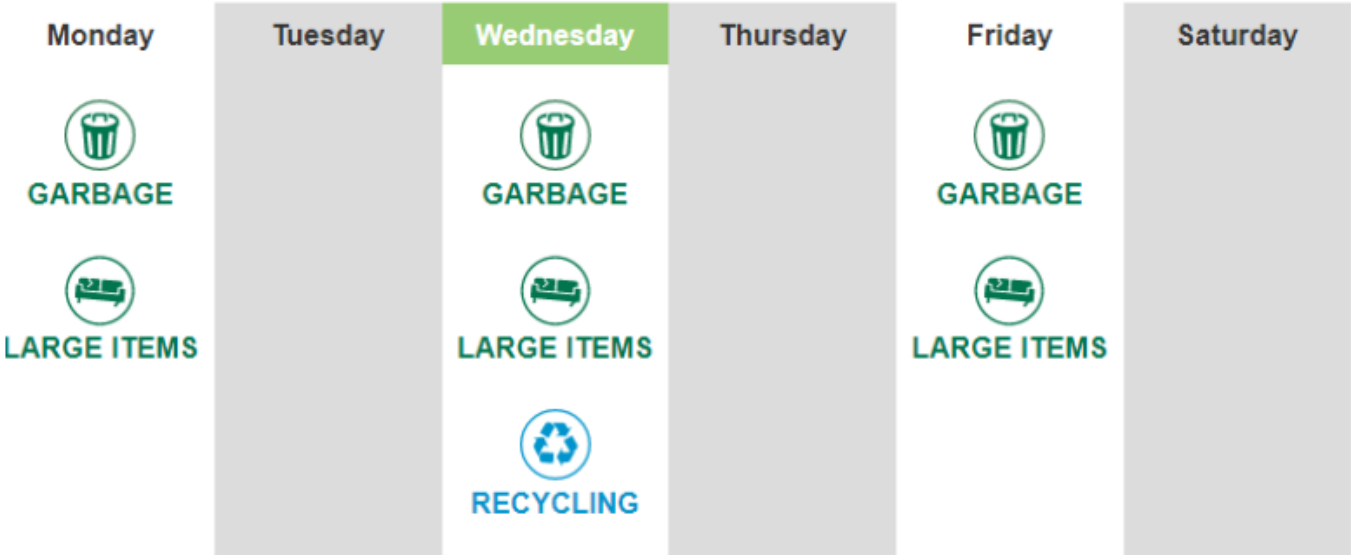
RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Increase DSNY Garbage Collection Frequency

The first recommendation to improve sanitation conditions in Bushwick is to increase the frequency of DSNY garbage collection. As previously discussed, the increase in population density and street vendors has resulted in an increase in the amount of waste generated in the neighborhood. Increasing the frequency of garbage collection will help ensure that waste is disposed of promptly and prevent overflowing street bins.

Feasibility: The feasibility of this recommendation is moderate, as it will require additional resources from the DSNY to increase the frequency of garbage collection.

Cost-Benefit Analysis: The cost of increasing the frequency of garbage collection will likely be offset by the benefits of improved waste management and reduced clean-up costs.



RECOMMENDATIONS

B. Increase Street Bin Capacity

The second recommendation to improve sanitation conditions in Bushwick is to increase the capacity of street bins. Overflowing street bins are a common issue in the neighborhood, and the high population density and increased number of street vendors have only compounded this problem. By increasing the capacity of street bins, it will be possible to reduce the number of overflowing bins and improve the overall cleanliness of the streets.

Feasibility: The feasibility of this recommendation is high, as it requires only the procurement and installation of larger street bins.

Cost-Benefit Analysis: The cost of procuring and installing larger street bins will likely be offset by the benefits of improved waste management and reduced clean-up costs. In The Council's Fiscal 2023 Budget Response, the Council called upon the Administration to include \$1 million for a new organics processing facility. However, no funding was included in the Executive Capital Commitment Plan.

Response Priorities	Amount Requested	Amount Included in the Exec Budget
Restore Sanitation's Fiscal 2023 Budget Cuts	\$47,800,000	\$0
Litter Basket Service	\$22,000,000	\$0
Restore & Baseline Prior Year Sanitation Cuts	\$12,064,000	\$1,925,687
Rat Mitigation Program	\$4,880,000	\$0
Organics Drop-off Sites	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000

Source: The Office of Management and Budget, 2022

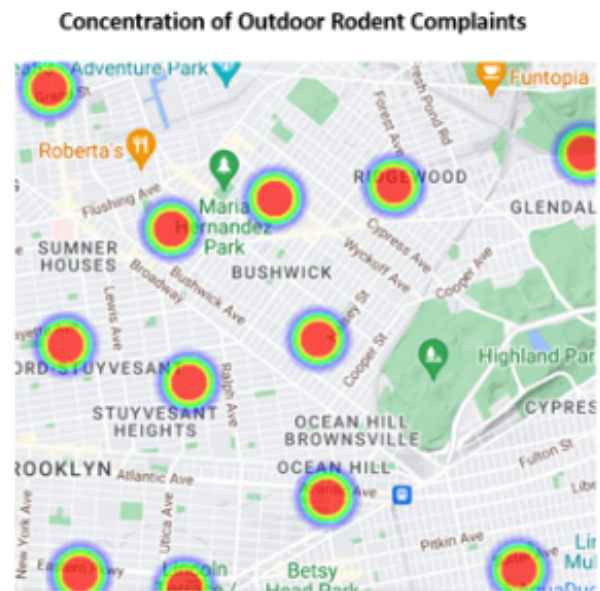
RECOMMENDATIONS

C. Implement Rodent Abatement Measures

The third recommendation to improve sanitation conditions in Bushwick is to implement rodent abatement measures. The high population density in the neighborhood has resulted in an increased risk of rodent infestations. Implementing measures such as bait stations and sealing potential entry points will help reduce the risk of rodent infestations and improve overall sanitation conditions.

Feasibility: New York City established a rat task force in 2017. The task force takes a proactive approach to rat control, using data analysis and scientific methods to identify areas with high levels of rat activity and implementing targeted interventions to reduce the rat population. With the city invested in this issue, the feasibility of this recommendation is high.

Cost-Benefit Analysis: The cost of implementing rodent abatement measures will likely be offset by the benefits of reduced risk of rodent infestations and improved overall sanitation conditions.



Source: NYC Open Data

RECOMMENDATIONS

D. Increase Street Vendor Awareness of Sanitation Regulations

The fourth recommendation to improve sanitation conditions in Bushwick is to increase street vendor awareness of sanitation regulations. Street vendors are a common sight in the neighborhood and generate a significant amount of waste. Increasing street vendor awareness of sanitation regulations, such as properly disposing of waste, will help reduce the amount of waste generated and improve overall sanitation conditions. Street vendor advocacy groups work to improve the system and help street vendors grow their businesses. It is important to have conversations with these stakeholder groups to ensure that street vendors are aware of their responsibilities, many of the rules and regulations for street vendors are complicated and difficult to understand.

Feasibility: The feasibility of this recommendation is high, as it requires only the development and implementation of an awareness campaign.

Cost-Benefit Analysis: The cost of developing and implementing an awareness campaign will likely be offset by the benefits of improved waste management and reduced clean-up costs.



RECOMMENDATIONS

E. Cleanliness Rubric

Need: The Mayor's Office of Operations issues Street & Sidewalk Cleanliness Ratings, but the process is opaque and the cleanliness scores don't always correspond to conditions on the ground. For example, 94.1 percent of streets in Community Board 2, 88.9 percent of streets in Community Board 4, and 93.7 percent of streets in Community Board 5 were rated "acceptably clean" in the November 2020 monthly report. All four of these Community Boards were given a 100 percent sidewalk cleanliness rating for quarter 2 of Fiscal Year 2021.

Purpose: To improve sanitation conditions in Bushwick, Community Board 4 can implement a neighborhood sanitation rubric. This rubric will provide a systematic method of evaluating the cleanliness of neighborhood streets and sidewalks, including the presence of sidewalk garbage, street bins, rodents, rain gardens, and catch bins. The rubric will be based on data collected by the Community Board, local residents, and local businesses, and will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changing conditions.

This rating system could be used by community boards to identify areas of the neighborhood that may require additional attention and resources in order to improve the overall cleanliness of the neighborhood. It could also be used to track the effectiveness of efforts to address cleanliness issues over time and to identify any trends or patterns that may emerge.

How to Use: To use this rating system, community boards could conduct regular evaluations of each block within their jurisdiction, taking note of the levels of garbage, rat sightings, and other negative externalities observed. Based on these observations, the community board could assign a rating for each block, with higher ratings indicating a higher level of cleanliness. The fewer points applied to a category implies worse-off conditions.

Total Scoring:

0-25: Poor Condition 26-50: Fair Condition 51-75: Good Condition 76-100: Excellent

Community District:

Location:

Date:

Street Trash (30 Pts Total)	Points Allocated	Notes
Litter on sidewalks and streets (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Illegal dumping (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Overflowing street bins (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Rodent Sightings (25 Pts Total)		
Rat Sightings (0.0-12.5 Pts)		
Evidence of rodent activity (droppings, nests) (0.0-12.5 Pts)		
Catch Bins (10 Pts)		
Condition of catch bins (cleanliness, proper placement) (0.0-5.0 Pts)		
Overflowing catch bins (0.0-5.0 Pts)		
Tree Pits (10 Pts)		
Litter in tree pits (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Condition of tree grates (cleanliness, proper placement) (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Rain Gardens (15 Pts)		
Litter in rain gardens (0.0-7.5 Pts)		
Condition of rain gardens (cleanliness, proper maintenance) (0.0-7.5 Pts)		
Vandalism (10 Pts)		
Graffiti on public property (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Broken windows, street lights, and other forms of vandalism (0.0-10.0 Pts)		
Total Points		

PUBLIC EDUCATION & OUTREACH PLAN

A public education and outreach plan can be designed to engage local residents, businesses, and organizations in maintaining clean and healthy streets and sidewalks in Bushwick. The objectives of this plan are to:

- Educate the community about proper waste disposal practices and the importance of maintaining clean and healthy streets and sidewalks.
- Encourage community involvement in neighborhood cleanup efforts and report incidents of litter and illegal dumping.
- Provide opportunities for community members to provide feedback on the cleanliness of their neighborhood and make recommendations for improvement.
- Ensure that information and outreach practices are inclusive and accessible to all members of the Bushwick community, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, income, or other demographic factors.



01 — Consider Time & Location

The public education and outreach plan will take place during evenings and weekends in various locations throughout Bushwick, including community centers, schools, local businesses, and other public spaces.



02 — Use the Media

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, disseminate information and engage community members in real-time. Local news outlets, such as community newspapers and radio stations, reach a broad audience and keep the community informed about the public education and outreach plan.

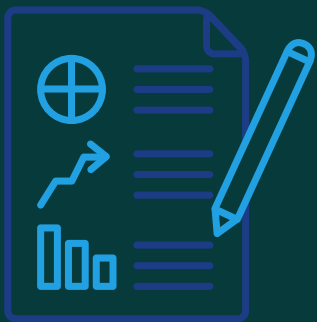


03 — Participatory Action Research

PAR is a research method that involves the active participation of community members in the research process. The Community Board will work with local residents, businesses, and organizations to identify areas of need and develop recommendations for improvement. This will ensure that the public education and outreach plan is responsive to the needs and concerns of the community.

CONCLUSION

The plan includes actionable steps that the Community Board can take to improve the sanitation conditions in Bushwick, a sanitation rubric to analyze the cleanliness of neighborhood streets, data visualizations, and neighborhood photos. Here are some potential next steps:



DSNY DATA TRANSPARENCY

Work with DSNY correspondents to receive accurate and real-time data about garbage pickups.



EMPOWER YOUTH

Empower neighborhood youth to get involved with neighborhood cleanup!

“Collaboration is important not just because it’s a better way to learn. The spirit of collaboration is penetrating every institution and all of our lives. So learning to collaborate is part of equipping yourself for effectiveness, problem-solving, innovation and life-long learning in an ever-changing networked economy.” - Don Tapscott

PHOTO GALLERY

THE FOLLOWING PHOTOS DEPICT SANITATION CONDITIONS THAT ARE CONCERNING RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY BOARD 4. THESE PHOTOS WERE ALL TAKEN IN BUSHWICK, BROOKLYN WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF COMMUNITY BOARD 4.

Garbage Piles on the Street



PHOTO GALLERY

Evidence of Rat Sightings



PHOTO GALLERY

Loose Trash and Graffiti



PHOTO GALLERY

Graffiti

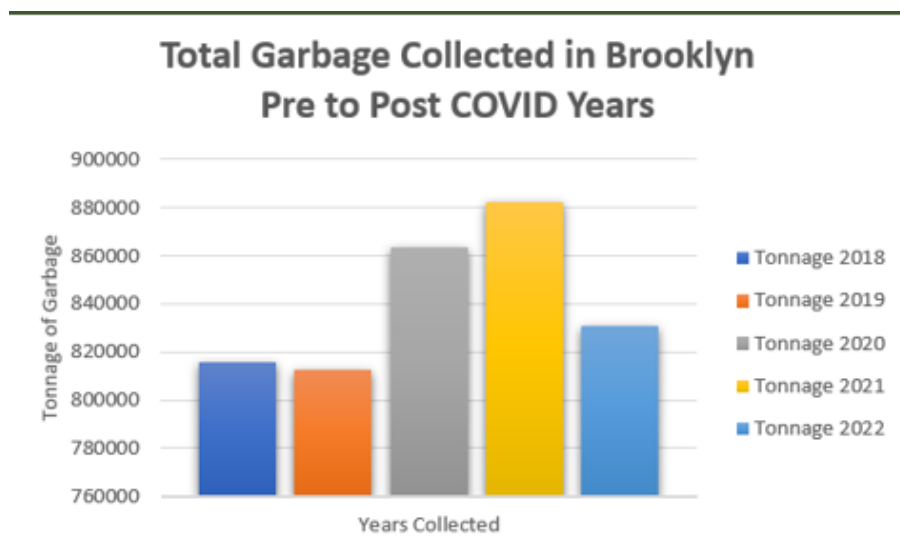
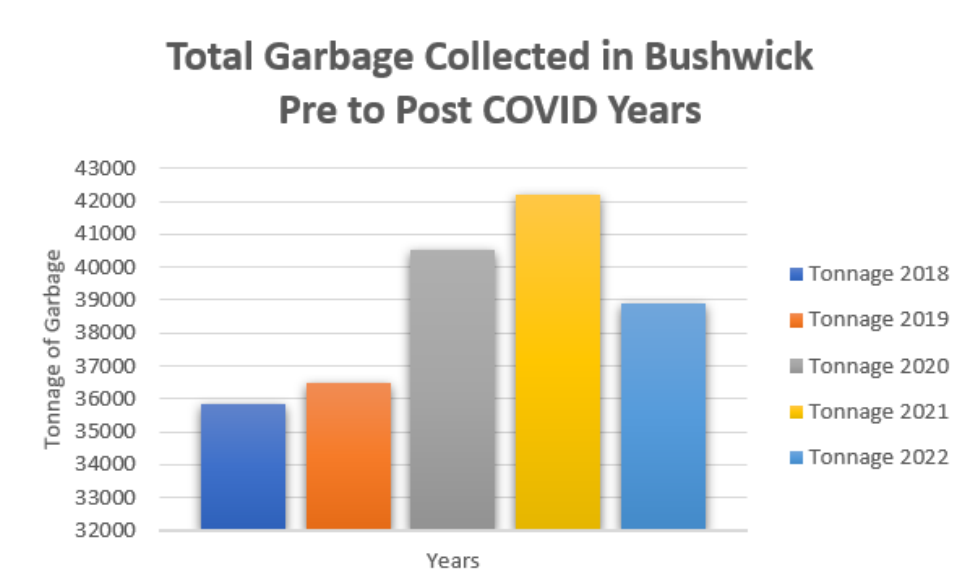


APPENDIX

Potential Data Discrepancy

There isn't a huge difference between garbage tonnage collected in Bushwick versus the rest of Brooklyn. This can be due to many reasons:

- DSNY is required to pick up a certain amount of tonnage and reports that number regardless of the actual collection
- Collected garbage does not include garbage left back on streets



REFERENCES

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https://NYCPlanning/labs-cd-needs-statements/raw/master//BK%20DNS%20FY%202023/FY2023_Statement_BK04.pdf

The New York Times > Real Estate > Image > Map: Bushwick, Brooklyn (nytimes.com)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the residents and community organizations in Bushwick who work tirelessly to ensure that their neighborhood remains a vibrant and thriving place to live. The challenges related to sanitation and other issues faced by the neighborhood require a collaborative and community-driven approach, and the dedication and hard work of Bushwick's residents is an inspiration.

Finally, I would like to thank the readers of this report for their interest in learning more about the current conditions of Bushwick, Brooklyn. It is my hope that this report will serve as a useful resource for those who wish to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing this dynamic and diverse neighborhood.

Thank you for your continued support and the opportunity to engage in this project!

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THANKYOU