

# THE RED HOOK BICYCLE MASTER PLAN DESIGN COMPETITION

## Urban Planning:

The urban master plan for Red Hook recognizes the diversity of physical environments that make the neighborhood unique. The plan establishes a network of interconnected dedicated bicycle pathways (lanes). Each of the 5 dedicated lanes creates a route that reinforces distinct existing patterns of social and recreational activities within the neighborhood. The distinctions of each lane are manifested by an appropriately derived profile and architectural identity.

While the prescribed site for the bicycle garage has potential as a catalyst to generate community activities under the bridge trestle, its distance from the subway entrance and its direction opposite from the neighborhood of Red Hook make it an imperfect site.

Our proposal initially places the garage on the prescribed site with the expectation that it will kick-start the development of this large linear open space as an outdoor locus for the community.

Ultimately though, in phase 2, the garage is moved to a smaller site adjacent to the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge and the future Gowanus Canal Greenway. The new site is preferred due to its potential to contribute to the generation of several key improvements to the immediate environment including a much-needed second access to the overhead subway platform and access to the canal. Increased visibility from the subway station and proximity to Red Hook itself are considered critical qualities for this location as well.

## Architecture:

The bicycle garage itself is comprised of linked and stacked shipping containers. The shipping container, in spite of its transcendence into an artifact of urban chic, is nonetheless an acutely appropriate element to comprise the garage.

Containers arranged side by side become the bicycle garage while alongside it (in phase 1) or underneath it (in phase 2) another group of containers is arranged to contain compatible services – i.e.: sale & repair shop, cybercafe, interpretative center, etc.

Powerful in its iconic simplicity, the container is an ideal element - appropriate for its functional and poetic qualities. Its reuse is a forward-looking strategy for building while its imagery is panegyric of the neighborhood's heritage of shipping.

## Development:

The scale of the neighborhood and the nature of an urban master plan presuppose our proposal as a template for phased implementation. The design template allows for development of a set of tangible, interrelated strategies that can be implemented separately to achieve the overall design.

The discreet nature of the lanes intends to foster a sense of "ownership" for community-based groups, appeal to specific user groups and create discreet elements that will appeal to diverse funding sources.

We are confident that an integrated and symbiotic development of bike lanes and surrounding activities will stimulate broader improvements to this large, diverse community.