

# City taps developer to transform NYPD garage in Jamaica into large affordable housing project

Move kicks off de Blasio's Jamaica Action NOW development plan



By

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The site will be developed by Omni New York.

Photo: Omni New York

The city selected a developer to turn a former NYPD parking garage in Jamaica, Queens, into a large, mixed-use complex with more than 350 affordable apartments, officials announced Thursday.

The building, which will be developed by Omni New York, is a key component of the de Blasio administration's 2015 economic development initiative called the Jamaica NOW Action Plan, which aims to spur job growth and retail development in the neighborhood.

"[This] proposal builds on southeast Queens' strengths as a commercial and transit hub," said Maria Torres-Springer, president of the city's Economic Development Corp.

A request for proposals for the site was issued in February 2015, with Manhattan-based Omni submitting the winning bid. All of the units in the new building, located on 168th Street between Jamaica and 93rd avenues, will be enrolled in the city's affordable-housing program, and a portion of the parking in the building will be dedicated for NYPD use.

The project, which will also include ground-floor retail, is the first milestone of a larger effort to foster job growth in Jamaica, which is served by four subway lines, a major Long Island Rail Road junction and the Airtrain to John F. Kennedy International Airport. Yet, despite those existing transit advantages and a 2007 rezoning that allowed for the construction of ample commercial office space and hotels, job growth and economic activity have declined during the past decade, according to the city.

De Blasio's plan calls for improving streetscapes and storefronts to entice more retail shoppers, launching job programs for residents and unlocking vacant lots for housing and commercial development. The neighborhood will also be the first in the