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Remaking Park Ave. Into a Spot to Splash

By DAVID W. CHEN

For those New Yorkers who never received a coveted invitation [last summer to dive into Dumpsters converted into pools](#) in Brooklyn, there is a much easier alternative this year: Park Avenue.

For the first three Saturdays in August, the [Bloomberg administration](#) will open three Dumpster pools on the east side of Park Avenue between 40th and 41st Streets.

With Grand Central Terminal and the MetLife Building serving as a backdrop, the pools will be above ground, encircled by a five-foot-wide metal deck with a nonstick rubber surface, and accompanied by several changing-room cabanas, portable showers and portable toilets.

The pools, which will be open 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., are part of the city's Summer Streets initiative, now entering its third year, which closes off long stretches of Park Avenue and other streets to cars and trucks.

But while most of the attention focused on transportation the first two years, the program this year will also emphasize entertainment, like the [New York International Fringe Festival](#), and recreation, highlighted by the new pools.

"While they have been lovingly referred to as Dumpster pools, don't let the name fool you," said [Janette Sadik-Khan](#), the city's transportation commissioner. "These are clean, compliant mobile pools that will put even more 'park' into Park Avenue. It will almost be like a Park Avenue boardwalk."

Each pool will be roughly 8 feet wide and 22 feet long, with a sloped bottom between 3 and 5 ½ feet deep — bigger than the typical Dumpster. There will no diving boards. No baby pool, either.

At no cost to the city, Macro-Sea, the Brooklyn company that [designed the Dumpster pools](#), is converting the containers, which will be cleaned and have protective liners. As is the case with any other above-ground pool, a water filtration system will be installed, and the Department of

Health will need to sign off on a permit, said David Belt, president of Macro-Sea.

Crunch, the fitness gym, will donate lifeguards, Ms. Sadik-Khan said.

At the end of each Saturday, the deck will drop to the sides and the pools will be covered by a heavy-duty mesh. The containers will then sit curbside, as if they were Dumpsters at a construction project — except that there will not be debris, but rather water, inside. The containers will be locked.

There has been no word yet on whether Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg will take a ceremonial dip. But Ms. Sadik-Khan said, “I’m certainly going to get my feet wet.”