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Shift to online car auctions yields 6-acre bonus

As bimonthly Brooklyn Navy Yard sale of city-owned vehicles is handed off to a pair of the country's largest e-retail sites, space is freed up for development.

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Fuhgeddabout scoring that cut-rate police car or fire engine at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The city has scrapped its bimonthly fleet auction, [Crain's Insider reported](#), and instead turned the keys of hundreds of used and battered municipal vehicles over to a pair of the country's largest e-retail sites.

Those searching for an old garbage truck or prison bus must now bid against a nationwide network of buyers through Property Room and Copart, which will hold weekly online auctions. "The fleet auctions will be more convenient and competitive," said a spokeswoman for the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, which oversees the auctions.

The move frees up six acres of property at the Brooklyn Navy Yard near Steiner Studios and presents a big opportunity for the historical facility's owner—the city of New York. Though Navy Yard President Andrew Kimball would not discuss plans for the property, he said it "will become another key element of the Navy Yard's transformation into the nation's premier industrial park and engine for local job creation."

More than 200 vehicles—ranging from basic Chevy Impalas to hybrid autos and even a few of the Parks Department's John Deere Gators—have gone up for grabs since the city announced its partnership with the companies last month. Each year, the city hocks roughly 2,500 of its 27,000 vehicles.

Auction revenues for 2011 were \$7.6 million, down from \$8.8 million in 2008. The Department of Citywide Administrative Services will give Property Room a 12.5% cut of each sale, but expects to save money on towing, management and staffing—though all its auction staff have been reassigned within the agency.

A spokeswoman for Property Room—which runs auctions for 2,800 police departments (including the NYPD), municipalities and other organizations nationwide—said all city vehicles up for bid are available for public view near Brookhaven, L.I.



Buck Ennis

More than 200 vehicles have gone up for grabs in the last month.

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