LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I am on an Amtrak train traveling south alongside the Hudson River, and I can see it approaching in the distance.


This is the New York issue. Our thoughts on the town in which we live, work, and play. In the pages that follow, you'll hear from Amina Hassen and her approach to planning in Highbridge, Bronx. You'll join Chris Polansky as he surveys Greenpoint’s industrial district. You'll travel with our resident cabby, Melissa Plaut, and stop off in Foley Square to reflect on the controversial “Tilted Arc” with Brian Lamberta. With an affordable housing crisis on the horizon, if not already here, seeing public and private housing through the eyes of Jenny Akchin and Nate Heffron will likely change how you view housing policy. All together, the collective works of our featured authors are sure to show you a New York you've never seen before.

You'll also hear from Jemilah Magnusson about her career in communications and transit with The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy; and from Cecilia Kushner, Deputy Director of Strategic Planning with the Department of City Planning. You'll even get a brief glimpse into the lives of two NYPD officers—and students of Hunter Urban Affairs and Planning—who've taken advantage of a long-standing commitment that the NYPD has made to CUNY and to New York.

This semester, we've included our urban planning studios from the past year. In the Hunter urban planning program, the studio is the capstone; the chance for students to put their skills and knowledge to the test in real world applications. Our students consulted with four organizations: Regional Planning Association, Transportation Alternatives, Sustainable South Bronx, and Long Island City Partnership. Their projects are published here.

The train I'm on just went underground. The conductor tells me we'll be arriving at Penn Station shortly, and I imagine what it must have been like to stand in the hall of the original Pennsylvania Station, which was demolished a little over 50 years ago. The treasured landmark’s fall was a cautionary tale, one that sparked a movement to preserve this city’s history. Its legacy reminds us to slow down every now and then and reflect on the spaces that make this town what it is. So join us as we do just that. From the desk of the Urban Review, we present to you: New York City.

Daniel Townsend
Editor-in-Chief
CONTENTS

INTERVIEWS
04 Cecilia Kushner
by Dash Henley

06 Ryan Baer, Amanjeet Singh, and Timothy Viltz
by Eileen Botti

30 Jemilah Magnusson
by Mia Moffett

FEATURES
10 For Hire
by Melissa Plaut

15 New Paradigms and Familiar Compromises
by Jenny Akchin

20 The Shop Floor Under Siege
by Chris Polansky

24 A Case for Social Practice Intervention in Highbridge
by Amina Hassen

27 Tilted Arc
by Brian Lamberta

30 The Hidden Cost of the Highlife
by Nathan Hefforn

STUDIO
34 Connecting the Point(s)
35 Queens Blvd.
36 RPA
37 Sunnyside Yards
38 ENDNOTES
What made you first decide to study planning and go into planning work?

After I finished high school, I got into university and I studied geography. I had this one professor who was making me do this really cool exercise of looking at maps and trying, just from the map, to decipher the history of the place and its economy: what type of agriculture they had, when the land was developed, and what type of industry was strong there. I just got fascinated by the incremental way in which humans develop societies.

How did you transition to working at the city planning office in Paris?

I got a B.A. in geography, then I was going for a Master of Urban Planning and I needed an internship, like most students do, and one of my professors was working for the City of Paris as an architect and she was working in this sort of newly created office that was meant to resolve issues around land use and Paris assets between Paris and the suburban counties. One issue in particular that I worked a lot on was about cemeteries. Paris used to dump all the uses it didn’t want into suburban communities, including their cemeteries. So today if you’re Parisian, you die in Paris but you’re actually not buried in Paris. You’re buried in plenty of cemeteries outside. And so these municipalities are obviously unhappy. Sometimes 25% of their land is dedicated to Parisian uses that don’t pay taxes to them. And so my role was to figure out what could Paris give to these municipalities or how could they be more involved in the management of these Parisian assets that were on their land.

When you finished your planning degree, what made you decide to go to University College London?

So as part of my master’s degree in France, I had the opportunity to do an exchange program with UCL. I went there for nine months, fulfilled a lot of my French credits at UCL, and met my husband there — who
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Is that because the planning culture is less contro-

bines of the regulations are.

rules are actually much simpler and what you see is what you get. There's not a lot of creativity within development beyond what the bare bones of the regulations are.

Is that because the planning culture is less controversial here or because it's less litigious?

I think there's less development pressure. The New York City zoning resolution is so complicated because you have a highly sophisticated development industry and they're constantly pushing the boundaries of what can be done in a way that's highly sophisticated. And I don't think you have that in Europe. You don't have it to that degree at all. Also, the U.S., New York especially, does public engagement much better and that's because since Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), they've been forced to work with communities. There's no such thing as ULURP in France. In New York, we've been forced to do that for 40 years now. Communities are more sophisticated and the planners know how to do more genuine engagement. [Europe does] regional planning in a way that we don't do at all in New York. Greater London was created only a few decades ago, so they've re-thought how to actually think about the right scale for development. Paris is right now in the process of changing their regional boundary and their regional institutions so their institutions are evolving in a way that is absolutely not happening in the U.S.

How would you compare your study of planning in France and the UK vs. Hunter's urban planning program?

Hunter is more community-based so I think Hunter really often has a more political point of view of, "You're a planner, you're serving the community, and that's part of your ethics.” I think when they train you in Europe they're much more agnostic about that.

What was the arc of your career at the Department of City Planning?

I first became an intern there because I had a professor, Mitch Korbey here, who was my land use law professor who used to be the director of the Brooklyn office and was always saying, "If you want a free internship, I can hook you up!” So that’s what I did for three months and then I became a paid intern and finally a job opening happened. I was in the Brooklyn office as a borough planner for three and a half years. I was really lucky because it was a time when there were a lot of high profile cases in Brooklyn and so I landed on Coney Island. I spent three and a half years just working on that plan from the very early visioning to actually putting the rezoning together, to selling it to the elected officials, up until the very end. That was an amazing experience because it was very complex, highly political in pretty nasty ways, involved a lot of agencies, and involved City Hall a lot, so it was kind of trial by fire in that respect. I think to this day, it's the funniest, coolest thing I've worked on. After that project ended, I got the opportunity to work in the executive office. I was there for four years, [and then] I was ready to move on and go back to planning. Another opportunity came up to lead the resiliency efforts for the agency. So we got a lot of money after Sandy - we got $8 million - which is a lot in planning terms. Now, we have about fifteen projects and our goal is to establish a land use framework for resiliency: how do zoning and other regulations change in order for us to make resiliency investments in a way that's good for the long-term of the city?

How do you think the planning profession has evolved between your time as a student and your time as a professor? What advice – taking into account that experience – would you give to current planning students?

When I began to work, we never talked about equity and we never talked about resiliency. We talked about affordable housing, we talked about a housing market, but really equity is something that Mayor de Blasio brought to the forefront and I think that resiliency is something the city hadn't really thought about prior to [Hurricane] Sandy. My advice would be, one of the main questions one is to ask his or herself when thinking of becoming a planner – and one can take a long or short time to answer it – is whether or not you want to be a generalist or a specialist. So I think one's career can take very different pathways and trajectories. It's really important for people to answer that for themselves and to really seek out what makes them happy.
An ongoing partnership provides graduate scholarship opportunities for New York Police Department staff to study in Hunter College’s Department of Urban Affairs and Planning each year. We had a chance to interview two current students, Timothy Viltz and Amanjeet Singh, and one alumnus of the program, Ryan Baer, to hear more about this partnership and how it enhances their professional aspirations.

What was your position with the NYPD prior to studying at Hunter, and how long had you worked there? For Ryan, what is your current position with the NYPD after completing studies at Hunter?

TV: Prior to attending Hunter, I was the Crime Analysis Officer at the 50th Precinct for four years. I was primarily responsible for the statistical analysis of the precinct’s crime and enforcement activity, along with some minor GIS modeling and quality assurance work. Before that I was on patrol for six years.

RB: Currently, I’m assigned to the Deputy Commissioner of Management Analysis and Planning’s office. I basically work as an analyst doing both policy and quantitative analysis, as well as some geospatial work. Prior to attending Hunter, I worked as a patrol officer in two precincts in Queens.

What motivated you to take time away from the job to study Urban Affairs and/or Planning?

TV: I always intended to continue my education after finishing my undergraduate career. It was simply a matter of timing. Patrol is very unpredictable and not ideal for attending school at night since any day can easily turn into a twenty-hour marathon. Once I began working in crime analysis, it was easier to manage my schedule so I applied for the scholarship.

AS: I always wanted to pursue my master’s at Hunter College. One colleague of mine was a Hunter College graduate, and he told me about the program. After getting promoted to lieutenant, I wanted to pursue my dream of getting my degree.
RB: I had planned on getting an advanced degree when I became a police officer back in 2008 because I knew an advanced degree would help me hone my research and analytical skills. This was important to me because the NYPD has so many opportunities for a person to find his or her niche and really have an impact on this City. I knew that to have these opportunities, I'd have to prepare myself and earn the privilege of doing this kind of work. I started researching some of the scholarship opportunities that the Department offers and came across the Hunter Urban Affairs scholarship.

Is there a particular policy or planning issue in New York City that you feel passionate about, or seek to effect change in?

RB: I’m currently working on expanding the Department’s Opioid Overdose Prevention Program. This program was started back in 2013 with the goal of reducing the number of opioid related deaths in the five boroughs. To do this, the Department began the process of training and equipping police officers with a drug called Narcan, also known as naloxone, which when administered to a person having an overdose, saves the person’s life. Since becoming a part of this project, I’ve helped to expand the number of officers who are trained on how to use and are equipped with an overdose prevention kit. All the credit in the world goes to the officer who actually saved the person’s life, but it’s still rewarding to know that I contributed to it.

AS: I am very intrigued by city budgets and the four-year financial planning that the city makes. It affects every aspect of running the city. I want to work in the budget office of NYPD after I graduate to get better understanding of all the planning that is involved with the city budget and four-year planning.

TV: I feel most passionate about bridging gaps in understanding between the public and police. There is a substantial disconnect. I believe the concerns of both sides aren't completely understood by the other and there is a lack of objective data relating to violence towards police and use of force against the public that forces each to operate on presumptions without the empirical evidence necessary to make informed policy decisions. I’d like to see a greater degree of transparency so the police department and the public can focus on factual data to better understand the scope and severity of problems associated with policing. I think it would go a long way towards healing past wounds and minimizing future ones.

Aman and Tim, what are your goals after graduating from the program?

AS: To have better understanding of how the city works -- all the planning and programs involved.

TV: After graduating, I will return to the department to complete the second half of my career. I hope to be used in a role that could take advantage of the skills and knowledge I have acquired while attending the program. My next function will ultimately be subject to the needs of the department, but I would enjoy a detail that would benefit from the intensive GIS work I have elected to pursue.

What skills, knowledge, classes, or projects did you [or would you] find most applicable to your work with NYPD after graduation?

RB: If I had to pick specific courses, I’d definitely say that Sigmund Shipp’s workshop course was instrumental in exposing me to the basics of how analysts work with stakeholders to achieve goals. Because we worked with real clients who expected us to produce a deliverable work product, you really got a sense of how to interact with a person who needs your help. It was also really valuable to see how working with real-life clients has so many more moving parts than doing strictly academic work.

TV: Alongside the required curriculum elements, I have elected to focus on GIS courses to expand my proficiency in the field. I have a natural aptitude for spatial analysis and information technology so I enjoy the challenge.

Within the Urban Affairs program itself, I have been exposed to an incredible number of talented and passionate individuals – both students and professors – who have given me a window into the realms of urban development, community planning, policy analysis, and advocacy. Listening to and learning from the experience of my peers has been an exceptionally enriching experience.

What surprising things did you learn [or have you learned] during your time at Hunter? Anything that changed how you feel about your role as an NYPD officer?

AS: I met some amazing professors with a wealth of knowledge. Education has changed quite a bit since last time I was in college. I appreciated all the help I got from fellow graduate students and professors. I am taking a wealth of knowledge when I go back. I am going to share my good experiences with other members of the NYPD, so that they can get motivated to gain knowledge and education.

RB: Before I started at Hunter, I had a desire to do policy work, but I didn't really know what that meant. Attending Hunter helped me get a better understanding of the nut and bolt aspects of what actually makes up policy work. Hunter also really helped instill in me the importance of collaboration and working with others to make ideas become reality.
Having already been working in communications, how did the Urban Affairs program at Hunter enable you to transition your career as a communications manager?

I wanted to know more about the basics of cities and policy and all these things I had touched on in my work, but didn’t know a ton. So, it has been incredibly helpful in understanding where these policies come from and what they are designed to do, which is not an obvious thing. My interest has always been policy. Policy is the only thing that really matters honestly, when it comes down to it. Everything else can help or it cannot; you’re not really sure. Even though policy is the hardest thing to achieve, it is the thing that really, really matters. [Hunter] ended up being the perfect combination of communications work, urban work, and international development.

Sustainability is such an overused yet undefined term in planning today. What does it mean to you and to ITDP? Why do you think it hasn’t always been a facet of urban growth?

What we think of sustainability meaning and what it actually means in reality is something that can continue to work with the current resources that it has. So, it’s not necessarily about the environment; it’s about using what resources – financial, whatever, environmental – to build something that is going to be able to be maintained at that level. So, in that sense, the whole concept of sustainable transit and transport: it is transport that can continue to work for cities for the foreseeable future, and cars are not going to be able to continue to work for cities. It just gets worse and worse. Building more roads is the least sustainable thing you can do. It’s bad for the environment; it’s bad for the economy; it doesn’t help traffic at all; it makes traffic worse and every study ever done confirms that. The only way to move people in cities is to have everyone on transit. Creating good transit is important, but it is just as important to create development that supports good transit. You can have the best transit system in the world, but if nobody lives along the transit corridor they will still have to drive to it. When I think about sustainability, I think about:

How do we want to live? How do we want life to be in cities? Do we want people to have a good quality of life? Do we want them to be able to get where they are going safely? Do we want them to be able to move around their city? The poorest 20% of people in global south cities spend over a third of their income on transit, which is the highest percentage of any group. That is a lot when you are that poor. Connecting people is the only way you are going to improve cities and we all living in cities now.

ITDP has worked in over 25 countries and more than 100 cities. Tell us about a couple of ITDP projects that have inspired and interested you.

The one that has been really amazing to see has been the Nuevo de Julio corridor in Buenos Aires. It was implemented last year and it was done in a year. Nuevo de Julio is a very iconic street in Buenos Aires; it is known as the widest avenue in the world. It is up to 22 lanes; it’s really huge. They took away 6 lanes and put in two lanes of bus only traffic. They added green space for people to hang out in and submerged car lanes underneath this space for people. It does not feel like you are in a freeway; it feels like you are in a nice city-space. It improved traffic and cut 45 minutes off of transit along the corridor. To see these projects from a human level and to see how it is drastically improving lives, there is not a lot of work in international development that is this tangible.

How is ITDP addressing the exponential growth in places like China and India? How does ITDP support the large transportation and infrastructure projects currently going on in these and other countries in which you work?

The biggest obstacle in cities is really that people want cars. Cars have always been seen as upward mobility. We are trying to move people away from cars and tell them about the mistakes that we have made as a nation and show them how we are paying for them. In places like India and Manila, the traffic is completely out of control and you only have 10% of the population driving, but there is this attitude that we need to have everyone in cars.
ITDP is dedicated to promoting Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in countries around the world: How does BRT implementation differ overseas from that of the US?

Cleveland has the best BRT in the U.S. It has a silver standard rating, the Healthline BRT, which runs on Euclid Avenue. It has done great things for that city. It has leveraged a ton of development and did not really cost the city that much. They got a ton of grants from the Federal Government and I think it cost the city $200 million, which in transit money is free, basically. They have leveraged about $50 billion of development out of that. It’s really, really impressive. The issue in the U.S., which is difficult, is density. It’s difficult when you have people as spread out as they are in most U.S. cities to have enough people so that one corridor of BRT will be have enough [people]. You have to have a bus every five minutes for it to work and we just don’t have the ridership.

How can New York City learn from other cities and the land use and transportation work you are doing in these cities?

Surface Transportation and congestion pricing are the two things that New York City can do better.

How does ITDP go from research and policy recommendations to actual change, particularly in foreign countries?

It is really different in every single place. The difference between India and China and Brazil is hard to compare. When we get involved in cities, we usually get involved because we already have a relationship with the government. We usually will not get involved in a city unless we are sure they are willing to really do it. So, it is really us picking and choosing who to get involved with and us pushing them a little bit. We also work at the funding level with development banks in order to help them make money available for sustainable transportation.

What makes BRT the transportation mode implemented most today? Do you think we can ever achieve real BRT in the U.S.?

What makes it the best and most implemented option is that it is the most efficient way to move people in a city. When you look at cost and construction time, time from planning to implementation, and the capacity and speeds it can have if it’s done well, it’s hands down the best way to move the highest capacity of people.

Can poor BRT implementation damage being able to create a successful BRT line in the future?

That has absolutely happened. Between the late 1970s and 2000s, there were many fake BRTs in Brazil and it did damage the idea of BRT in Brazil. We have to sell the idea that getting a BRT is not a condolence prize for not getting a rail system.
As long as taxis have existed in New York City, residents and visitors have complained about them. These complaints, centering on congestion, pricing, and quality of service, have remained largely the same since the days of horse-drawn hackney carriages in the early 19th century. City agencies and private companies alike have long attempted to tackle the industry’s various problems. As taxis grew more prevalent after their introduction in 1907, regulations and technologies were adopted largely in piecemeal fashion to address problems as they emerged. Few, if any, of them were ever capable of providing long-term solutions, and several of these produced more problems than they solved.

While the city adopted regulations to address these issues, the private sector was busy developing technological innovations to improve the industry. The most recent and, arguably the most effective, of these is the smartphone app. As apps like Uber and Lyft “disrupt” the industry, the Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC), the city agency regulating the taxi industry, is scrambling to catch up. Taking a primarily reactive stance to technological innovations, the TLC is struggling to accommodate, legitimize, and adapt to technological solutions while also regulating them. Unfortunately, many of the current regulations are archaic, preserving outdated rules that no longer benefit the city. As the TLC clings to an antiquated framework, innovative solutions to taxi industry problems outpace regulatory adaptability. This attachment to the status quo is now, ironically, the taxi industry’s biggest problem. But before we can fully
understand the true impact of taxi apps and the regulatory challenges they present, we need to go back in time to the taxi app’s technological ancestors: the meter and the two-way radio.

THE METER
Meters were first installed in New York City taxicabs in 1907. Prior to this, rates were calculated by distance without the aid of an objective measuring device. Despite an 1839 ordinance that determined taxi fares, overcharging was rampant and distrust of drivers was high. Edward Rogoff, in his dissertation on taxi regulation, explains, "The taximeter was hailed as the solution to the problem of driver overcharging and is, in fact, where the taxicab got its name."[1]

By 1909, as new regulations governed meters and gas-powered cabs, taxis came to be regarded as a legitimate mode of public transportation. The industry expanded exponentially and competition grew fierce as drivers lowered their prices to attract riders, sparking a rate war. The Depression only intensified these problems as the scarcity of jobs caused a surge in drivers while ridership decreased. According to the TLC, "The situation was made worse by the tactics of ‘wildcat’ (unlicensed) taxis who used what some considered to be ‘underhanded tactics,’ to get more business."[2] Similar rate-cutting tactics are being employed in the industry today between Uber, Lyft, and the traditional yellow cab industry.

The Haas Act, while protecting the city from an oversupply of cabs, also contributed to the industry’s biggest inefficiencies, particularly in the uneven distribution of taxis across the city and the mismatch of supply and demand. It is precisely these inefficiencies that became the target of the next major taxi innovation: the two-way radio.

THE TWO-WAY RADIO
Introduced shortly after World War II, radio dispatching helped taxis better meet demand. This injected a measure of efficiency into the industry, creating a faster service and reducing empty cruising. With these improvements, the taxi industry continued to grow over the next two decades.

In the 1960s, the city experienced explosive population growth, largely from an influx of immigrants and rural migrants. The city’s taxis, still limited by Haas, were unable to meet the increased demand. Rogoff states that the year “1963 marked the beginnings of reports of taxicab shortages.... [and] also marked the advent of the gypsy cabs who cruised the poorer neighborhoods that medallion taxicabs avoided in order to favor more lucrative markets.... [These] operated essentially like their medallioned counterparts, except that they were totally outside the realm of regulation.”[5] The reluctance of medallion cabs to serve outlying areas created a gap in which gypsy cabs were able to flourish. (It should be noted the slang term gypsy cab originated in the 1960s and “stresses the ‘wandering’ meaning of gypsy, which is descriptive and not derogatory.”[6]) Supported by two-way radio dispatch work, gypsies and neighborhood livery car services served historically underserved areas and imitated the look of licensed medallion taxis, but they lacked a meter and the insurance that the city required for taxis.

By the late 1960s, gypsies became so ubiquitous that the City Council “mandated that all cabs be painted yellow by January 1, 1970, thus standardizing their appearance and differentiating them from the rising number of illegal ‘gypsy’ cabs.”[7] This decree solidified the yellow cab as a defining icon of New York City and reinforced the distinction between medallion and nonmedallion taxi services. There are correlations between the growth of the gypsies and private liver-
ies in the 1960s and the emergence of smartphone taxi apps in the early 2010s. In describing the gypsy industry, taxi historian Charles Vidich describes how these services “decreed a form of squatters’ rights on taxi service…. Their major justification has been the hallowed myth of free enterprise, which they contend has been severely violated by the monopolistic medallion taxi industry.”[8] Additionally, their unregulated nature enticed many drivers to abandon the medallion taxi in favor of driving for one of these services. Many drivers reported greater independence and higher earnings as their reasons for making the switch.[9] These trends are echoed fifty years later when Uber entered the New York market and lured licensed drivers away from yellow taxis, posing one of the biggest challenges to the medallion taxi system since the advent of the gypsies.

Mayor Lindsey created the TLC in 1971 to regulate both gypsy cars and medallion taxis, partially in response to the lack of control the city had over the emerging gypsy industry, but the TLC ended up imposing far fewer rules on radio-dispatch services than medallion and the disparity persists to this day. Street-hail pick-ups remained strictly off-limits to non-medallion vehicles, but there was little enforcement.

In the early 1980s, a new service emerged when radio-dispatched corporate limousines, also known as “black cars,” began operating in Manhattan. The yellow taxi industry took a hit as black cars provided an attractive option for passengers who could afford them.

In 1987, more than 40 years after their introduction, the TLC eliminated radios from medallion cabs, in reaction to public complaints that there was a street hail shortage. This produced a boom in nonmedallion services. Thus the practice of pre-arranged rides became the sole domain of meterless livery and black car services, while street hails remained the sole domain of medallion taxis.

A three-tiered class-based system emerged: gypsies and liveries for the poor, yellow taxis for the middle-class, and black cars for the wealthy. These distinctions in service and class use remained intact for the next 25 years, though the illegal practice of liveries picking up street hails was never fully curbed. Only in the early 2010s did the segments blur once again via the introduction of the green cab.

Medallion owners fought the green cab, arguing that it would devalue their considerable investments. But after much litigation and political manuevering, in 2013, Mayor Bloomberg finally introduced the green Boro Taxi. These are classified as “street-hail livery cars,” meaning they can legally pick up street hails in certain parts of the city as well as radio calls, thus loosening the medallion industry’s grasp on street hails for the first time since the Haas Act.

Arguing that the fears of the medallion industry were unfounded, Bloomberg announced that the Nasdaq stock was up for the Medallion Financial Corp, which finances taxi medallion purchase. He said, “The marketplace is saying this is good for everybody.”[10] This sentiment turned out to be rather optimistic. Journalist Josh Barro points out, “the start of falling medallion prices coincides with a June 2013 court ruling upholding the green cab program.”[11]

What green cabs have accomplished is the unprecedented blending of street hail and radio-dispatch services. Before the Boro Taxi was introduced, the right to pick up street hails by medallion cabs was sacrosanct. The erosion of this barrier has significantly weakened the once-powerful medallion monopoly. However, many in the industry would argue that an even larger threat to the medallion system comes from an altogether different innovation: the taxi app.
THE TAXI APP

Depending on your perspective, taxi (or e-hail) apps, like Uber and Lyft, are either the best or the worst thing that has ever happened to New York’s transportation landscape. Developed in San Francisco in 2010, Uber entered the New York black car market in 2011. Essentially a high-tech version of luxury limousine radio-dispatch, Uber used an innovative combination of smartphone and GPS technologies to match supply with demand, reduce wait times, and streamline payment for early adopters who were willing to pay a premium price.

The app simplified the process of getting a car for hire. According to journalist Megan McArdle, all you needed to do was “set up an account, plug in your credit-card number, and in less than five minutes Uber’s smartphone app will be showing you a map of your location, the nearest available cars, and how soon one can get to you. Click the screen a couple of times, and a sleek black sedan is on its way.”[12] In a break from traditional black car services, which charge either by the hour or using a flat zone rate, Uber programmed a meter into the app itself that measures speed and distance, much like a physical taximeter. In Uber’s version, however, the fare is not calculated using the TLC’s standards for taximeters, which do not apply to its service, but rather according to a proprietary algorithm. Uber’s fare is not visible to passengers during the ride and is not fixed at any one rate. It is, rather, based on a dynamic pricing model that gauges the varying levels of supply and demand in real time.

Known as “surge pricing,” it is the company’s most controversial tactic.

In examining Uber’s pricing model, writer James Surowiecki says Uber challenges a historically regulated industry while “also combating the sense that transportation is, in some sense, a public utility, and that it’s offensive to charge people so much more than they’re used to paying.”[13] This idea of transportation as public utility has mainly applied to taxis, buses, and subways, but not to black cars or livery cars. The TLC reinforces this impression by placing much stricter regulations on taxi pricing than it does on black car and livery pricing: there is a fixed rate for all yellow taxi rides and no fixed rate and no limit for nonmedallion trips. Hence, Uber was able to use surge pricing without regulatory intervention for its first two years in New York City, but lawmakers are currently introducing restrictions. At the urging of New York State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman, Uber recently agreed “to limit prices during ‘abnormal disruptions of the market’ – typically, emergencies and natural disasters – consistent with New York’s price gouging statute.”[14] Additionally, City Councilman David Greenfield has recently called for a cap that limits the company’s “maximum fees to twice the regular rate” at all times.[15] As Greenfield points out, “A yellow cab in NYC may not charge you $225 for $25 ride simply because it’s snowing – neither should Uber.”[16] The TLC is currently reviewing the proposal.

Surge pricing represents only one end of the Uber pricing controversy. After targeting an affluent niche market for its first year in New York, Uber expanded its model in 2012 to include lower-cost cars offering cheaper rides with a product called uberX. As one prominent tech blog points out, “moving down-market [brought] Uber into closer competition with existing taxi systems,” as well as with other competitors in the taxi tech space.[17] Uber and its closest competitor, Lyft, have been engaged in a price war ever since Lyft launched in New York in 2014. After Lyft entered the scene, Uber further lowered the price of uberX to 20 percent less than estimated metered taxi rates. Their website advertised that uberX rides were “cheaper than a New York City taxi. From Brooklyn to the Bronx, and everywhere in between, uberX is now the most affordable ride in the city.”[18] This rate war is reminiscent of the “wildcat” rate-cutting tactics of the 1920s and 1930s.

Uber has made no secret of its anti-taxi stance and is one of the backers of a group called Taxi Facts that claims “the taxi industry is a monopoly, controlled by a few powerful insiders who will do whatever it takes to protect their vast profits. Now, threatened by innovation and competition for the first time, ‘Big Taxi’ is spending millions on political campaigns to protect its turf.”[19] The taxi industry has tried to fight back and many medallion owners have called for regulations that address apps specifically. Gene Freidman, one of the largest medallion owners in New York City, argues that, while technological “disruption is good, it must happen within the framework of the law for an industry that serves the general public…. We welcome competition and technology, so long as all cab operators must be made to follow the same laws, rules and regulations.”[20] This regulatory inconsistency was raised at a City Council hearing in December 2014.
In addition to issues of privacy protections and customer data, council members discussed “the lack of a ‘level playing field’ between the apps and the traditional taxi and livery services.” Lawmakers have yet to propose equalizing regulations.

Uber also competes with the medallion industry by offering more attractive working conditions to drivers. Thousands of medallion drivers have defected to Uber, as they did to gypsies and livery services in the 1980s, to escape the taxi leasing system, the 12-hour shift structure, and the cutthroat competition for street hails. A recent story in the New York Post claims that “More than 10 percent of the 50,000 hacks who pilot 13,000 or so yellow cabs around the city have defected to the app-based livery service in the past four months. This not only means fewer taxis cruising the streets, it also caused medallion prices to plunge by an average $150,000.”

By bringing the passengers to the drivers, Uber, Lyft, and similar apps, cut down on cruising time, allowing drivers to save on gas and stress. Drivers report enjoying more independence working for an app company since they can choose the hours they drive and usually own or lease the cars they use for work. The benefit to drivers cannot be underestimated, and explains why many continue to work for Uber even though they are earning less per fare as the company’s 20% rate reduction translates to driver incomes as well.

E-hail apps provide another unexpected social benefit over traditional street hail service: a decrease in discrimination. Latoya Peterson points out that “most analysis of Uber’s costs and benefits leave out one huge piece of the appeal: the premium car service removes the racism factor when you need a ride.” Not only do apps create a form of blindness that reduces a driver’s ability to refuse passengers based on race, but it does so too for refusals based on destination, a major taxi complaint. Despite the various regulatory controversies surrounding e-hail apps, City Council members and TLC officials recently recognized their unprecedented ability to reduce discrimination in the for-hire vehicle industry. It is yet another ingredient in the efficiency cocktail that makes e-hail apps into “a significant threat to existing taxi and livery services.”

At the moment, yellow taxis do not have many tools with which to fight back. The introduction of apps into the city’s yellow taxi fleet was controversial and, naturally, litigious. One company, Hailo, tried to launch an e-hail app specifically for yellow cabs in 2012. The TLC, however, withheld the app’s approval. At the same time, black car and livery groups fought in court to block any apps from being used in medallion taxis, claiming that e-hailing was a form of prearrangement, the sole domain of radio-dispatch services. The TLC eventually passed a pilot program in December 2012 allowing apps to be used for e-hailing in yellow cabs. The lawsuit was dismissed soon after and Hailo entered the yellow cab market in 2013, the same time as Uber did.

Hailo withdrew after a year from the New York market. There is currently no app dedicated to yellow cabs. Fierce competition from Uber as well as TLC regulations governing pricing, phone use, and payment methods in yellow taxis continue to make innovation in that segment unattractive to private companies. Without updated regulations, the medallion industry will continue to experience attrition while the nonmedallion sector expands, as Uber’s uberX undercuts metered fares and cannibalizes its own yellow and green taxi service. In June 2014, Uber was cited as having nearly 7,000 for-hire-vehicles affiliated with its various bases. That number doubled by March 2015, reaching more than 14,000 and outnumbering yellow cabs.

Uber’s competitors and critics fear that, without regulation, “Uber would end up with a monopoly, and that would mean bad service and high prices.” The industry’s historical inefficiencies could intensify if Uber is eventually able to replace the medallion monopoly with its own high-tech version. According to taxi historian Graham Hodges, “Customers don’t quite grasp what it would mean to have a regulation-free taxi system – how dangerous it could be, how difficult it could be to control pricing once Uber really did gain a monopoly…. You’ll have a lot more accidents, a lot more speeding. And fares would be very chaotic, like they were in the 20s.”

THE UPSHOT

From the institution of the meter to the proliferation of apps, the taxi industry in New York has seen immense change over the past hundred years. Private companies, operating outside of existing regulations, have stepped in to solve the industry’s regulatory inefficiencies. These solutions come at the expense of the hyper-regulated yellow taxi industry as the framework that protected the medallion since 1937 is now the very thing hurting it.

The same inefficiencies that led to the installation of the meter, the two-way radio, and the taxi app continue to exist. The same issues with coverage and availability that gave rise to the nonmedallion industry are now giving rise to the e-hail app industry. Regulation thus far has been uneven and reactive, accommodating and adapting to “wildcat” innovations from the private sector. Regulators should instead work proactively and holistically, creating an environment in which innovation is encouraged and intelligently managed. There is perhaps no other industry that could benefit more from such “disruption.”
The symbolic space occupied by public housing in the American imagination is unmistakable. The mere mention of the “projects” conjures an image of concentrated urban decay, colossal buildings marked by latent criminal activity and visibly broken infrastructure. Descriptions of these developments generally focus on their dysfunction, the dangers to inhabitants, and, in a throwback perhaps to early housing reform movements, their deleterious impact on the social and moral life of residents unfortunate enough to live there. While critics of public housing disagreed on the causes for public housing’s chronic shortcomings—blaming poor design, lack of sufficient funding, and trends towards suburban development, among other factors—the symptoms were clear: public housing programs nationwide were failing to follow through on the promise of safe, decent, and affordable housing which the public housing program was developed to provide.

This image of the federal public housing program, largely colored by racism and classism, led to wide-scale government disinvestment over time, culminating in an end to new construction in 1973. In its place, a more decentralized, privatized approach to affordable housing emerged in the later part of the 20th century, made up of local community development corporations (CDCs) and non-profits which sought to create viable alternatives to the existing models of below market rate housing. These decentralized approaches sought to address some of the key concerns regarding public housing programs. Where public housing projects were seen as means of segregating and isolating poor people and people of color, decentralized approaches offered models which sought to deconcentrate poverty and integrate low-income and middle income housing.
Where public housing was seen as an inflexible and opportunity-limiting institution, decentralized affordable housing programs emphasized resident choice, particularly the choice to live outside of urban areas. And where public housing was associated with stigmatizing, “tower in the park” style developments, deconcentrated housing providers developed new models of public housing which sought to design buildings that were relatively inconspicuous, often integrating below-market units into mixed-income developments. With these approaches, decentralized housing networks positioned themselves as an antidote to the cyclical poverty and degeneration associated with more traditional public housing projects.

Today, although these developments are widely viewed as a vast improvement upon the quality of life as compared with those offered by public housing, in reality, the decentralized approach to social housing has failed to deliver a more effective solution in meeting the high demand for dignified, high-quality, and affordable housing. This is, in large part, due to similar constraints and challenges as those which limited the success of public housing reformers. First, the imposition of regulations and cost-constraints on both programs severely limited the quality and amount of housing the programs were able to provide. Second, both programs had the effect of reinforcing patterns of racial and socioeconomic segregation, an outcome of both structural and market factors. Finally, a political climate that proved dependable in its support for public housing, coupled with major private investment in the affordable housing market, allowed government actors to make decisions which ultimately benefitted real-estate investors more than low-income tenants. Even as decentralized housing networks have sought to improve and expand the stock of affordable housing nationwide, these factors have impeded the progressive ideals of the movement in ways not unlike the public housing movement before it, undermining its ability to create a truly effective social housing program. Moreover, the shortcomings of decentralized non-profit entities call into question whether, in the end, a market-based solution can truly offer an improvement on public housing programs, or whether, in fact, below-market housing might be better addressed through meaningful, long-term investments in government-provided housing.

The first major factor that has led to ineffective implementation of both decentralized and traditional social housing programs is the existence of unrealistic constraints on new housing construction. In the case of public housing, these constraints were built into the law itself; as part of the compromise that brought about the first national public housing program in the United States Housing Act of 1937 (commonly known as the Wagner-Steagall Act), wary legislators—responding in part to pressures from the real estate industry—imposed a restrictive per-unit cost ceiling, essentially requiring public housing authorities to skimp on amenities, utilize lower-cost materials, and generally downgrading the quality of housing construction.\[2\]

The disastrous impact of these cost-ceilings on the success of public housing projects is evident in the case of the infamous Pruitt-Igoe project in St. Louis, which has become symbolic of the failures of the public housing system more generally. As historian Katharine Bristol observes in her study of Pruitt-Igoe, the original plans for the project were both innovative and geared toward providing residents with high quality housing and a vast array of community amenities. Due to federally imposed cost limits, however, plans were stripped down to the barest essentials, producing housing that was less appealing than available market rate alternatives.\[3\] As tenants left Pruitt-Igoe for higher-quality housing, the project was forced to lower its income requirements in order to find new tenants, a decision which, in turn, decreased revenue for maintenance of the building over time. This snowball effect culminated in the building’s dramatic, televised demolition, widely seen as the symbol of the nation’s broader disinvestment in public housing.\[4\] While not all buildings suffered the same fate as Pruitt-Igoe, the project’s failure reveals the ways in which federal controls undermined the aspirations of housing reformers, and ultimately undercut the ability of public housing projects to succeed over time.

The failures of Pruitt-Igoe and similar projects contributed in large part to the emergence of independent local affordable housing groups, who positioned themselves as flexible and adaptive actors in contrast with the centralized governance of public housing authorities. CDCs were presented as autonomous, independent actors who could, “make decisions not just on the economic bottom line or on the strict guidance of some government program” but rather in response to the needs of local communities, with little government involvement.\[5\] However, in spite of their perceived position as autonomous agents of reform, in actuality CDCs are often constrained by strict approval requirements imposed by a vast array of stakeholders, including both government regulators and the residents of local communities in which they wish to build. In his work on the affordable housing design process, Sam Davis describes the arduous process by which affordable housing builders earn the right to construct new homes,
NYCHA Queensbridge Houses, Long Island City, Queens.

seeking multiple levels of approval from neighborhood, city, and state stakeholders. Due to a combination of NIMBYism and fear about the impact of high-density affordable housing in middle-income and affluent neighborhoods, Davis notes that affordable housing developers are often required to build low-density projects which are less cost effective than multi-family buildings, in order to gain permission to build affordable housing at all.[6]

Moreover, CDCs’ reliance on a variety of local and state funding sources can trap them in a sea of expensive regulatory requirements, as they strive to comply with the different building standards established by each funding body.[7] Davis’s candid explanation of the realities of affordable housing development underscore the ways in which decentralized networks are in fact just as subject to external regulation as public housing projects, if not more so. And, while the regulating bodies are quite different, the outcomes are similar—CDCs and non-profit developers are forced to compromise in the quality and amount of housing provided due to externally imposed mandates and the unavoidable high costs needed to comply with governmental and community based regulators.

A second element which has limited the effectiveness of both programs has been the geographic concentration of large populations of low-income and minority tenants, both explicitly through policy and as a consequence of the private market. This is particularly surprising in light of the fact that residential segregation was one of the primary political concerns which led to the demise of public housing and the rise of decentralized approaches to housing and urban development. The influence of concentrated poverty on access to opportunity for low-income residents, well documented in William Julius Wilson’s 1987 study, The Truly Disadvantaged, became a major focus of public concern towards the end of the 20th century.[8] Public housing, frequently placed in economically disadvantaged and racially isolated areas, was both an outcome and a cause of structural segregation, and this segregation only deepened over time, as white flight to the suburbs and the deindustrialization of urban areas ensured that public housing residents quickly became majority non-white and poor.[9] As government policy shifted to a focus on deconcentration of poverty, housing policy followed suit, with an increased focus on replacing public housing developments with mixed-income developments, and a focus on “choice”-oriented voucher programs.[10] These policies were epitomized by the HOPE VI program, a federal policy which provided housing authorities with funding to demolish public housing projects and replace them with mixed-income developments, in order to “transform poor, severely distressed, and segregated neighborhoods” into “resilient and sustainable places” often through the demolition of public house and development of mixed income communities in its place.[11]

While a major component of the HOPE VI program was the creation of socioeconomically integrated mixed-income neighborhoods, the degree to which these programs actually provided an antidote to the race- and income-based segregation of public housing is debatable. While the sites of redeveloped public housing are more economically and racially integrated after HOPE VI projects than before, this measure of integration does not account for the displacement of the majority of public housing tenants, many of whom relocated to new communities that are just as racially and economically homogenous as those they left. This form of resegregation is evident in the case of the Techwood/Clark Howell project in Atlanta, which contained 1,117 households prior to demolition, of whom only seventy-eight were able to return to the area after its redevelopment for mixed-income housing.[12] Of those who were eligible, but did not return to the new development, around one-quarter relocated to other, similarly homogenous federal housing projects, while about half of eligible residents opted to take a temporary housing voucher to support their relocation to market-rate housing. These vouchers were a major focus of Atlanta Housing Authority director Renee Glover, who saw in them an opportunity to “permanently close those warehouses of crushing poverty,” giving residents access to “improved environments and better housing” with the long term goal of “integrating them into the economic and social mainstream.”[13] For Glover and other proponents of vouchers, the program offered a way of freeing tenants from the geographic constraints of public housing projects, allowing them to relocate to wealthier communities with greater opportunity for socioeconomic mobility.
Although vouchers have, in certain regards, substantively improved quality of life outcomes for low-income tenants, on the whole the program has fallen short of expectations in terms of providing residents with the real choices about where they relocate, as well as in decreasing concentrations of poverty. In the case of the Techwood/Clark Howell project, for example, a longitudinal study conducted by Georgia State researchers found that former public housing residents tended to relocate in areas that were still predominantly minority and low-income, in other words, resegregating by race and class. This is in large part due to structural factors rather than individual choice; as sociologist Xavier Souda De Briggs observes in his study of Moving to Opportunity programs, the utility of vouchers in giving families viable choices around housing is sharply limited by the availability of units, as landlords opt to rent to non-subsidized tenants. As a result, many voucher holders have struggled to find and stay in housing in low-poverty neighborhoods over time. This trend is indicative of a larger issue with “choice” programs such as vouchers, namely, their reliance on the free-market being willing to provide housing to low-income residents. Not surprisingly, this is rarely the case—all the less so in cities with strong rental markets and in neighborhoods which might provide more access to jobs and educational opportunities for low-income renters. In this sense, contrary to their intention, choice programs may actually be perpetuating racial and socioeconomic isolation, rather than alleviating it. Although the program is credited with dismantling the dysfunctional urban environments that grew out of public housing, there is evidence that, in so doing, it has merely recreated and reinforced the same dynamic, in a new location.

The final and perhaps most important factor which has limited the effectiveness of both government provided public housing and decentralized affordable housing models is a lack of dependable government support for affordable housing, which led decentralized housing approaches to rely increasingly on private investment. As urban historian Joseph Heathcott observes, the United States has always had a “deep moral ambivalence” about the role of the federal government in managing public housing programs, which is evident in the lack of federal investment in the program throughout the late 20th century. Although members of Congress routinely approved plans for the development of new public housing, they consistently failed to secure adequate funding for these projects, causing a serious delay in the construction of new units in the 1950s and ’60s. Even under the progressive “War on Poverty” programs, enacted by Lyndon B. Johnson in the mid-1960s, public housing was de-prioritized in favor of investment in social services targeted at low-income urban residents. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, public concern mounted over the horrific living conditions in Pruitt-Igoe, Cabrini-Green, an infamous public housing project in Chicago, and other historically under-supported and underfunded high-rise projects. Rather than using this attention as an opportunity to call for greater support and reinvestment in public housing, however, President Nixon made the decision to establish a moratorium on new public housing construction, effectively making explicit the lack of federal support for the program, although it had suffered from an absence of this support for decades prior.

In light of the inconsistent federal support for below-market housing programs, it is hardly surprising that one of the perceived advantages of the decentralized housing network was its ability to function independently of government financing and support. While CDCs do rely heavily on government funding in the form of tax subsidies and community development block grants, they are also able to raise funds from private and nonprofit sources, which provides them some degree of resilience in the face of federal funding cuts. This has given CDCs a major advantage over public housing programs, allowing them to stay afloat even in times of federal spending cuts due to investment from a range of private sector sources. The trade off for this independence, however, is an increased reliance on private investment to achieve the goals of affordable housing production. Indeed, one major critique of CDCs and similar entities is that they are forced to compromise the interests of their constituents in order to ensure a steady stream of funding from private donors. Certainly this critique does not apply to all affordable housing developers, many of which are community-based organizations with a strong commitment to their
constituents. That said, the general shift towards private-public partnership models, inspired by the success of the decentralized housing network, has opened the door for redevelopment projects which prioritize market interests over the needs of low-income tenants, often isolating former tenants of public housing from the rewards of urban reinvestment.

This pattern is most evident in the discourse around mixed-income development and inclusionary zoning, two affordable housing models which rely heavily on increased market interest in urban areas and which link affordable housing goals to private development. These initiatives have been championed by public housing authority leadership and local elected officials alike, who see programs like HOPE VI as a way of revitalizing urban core areas and bringing higher-income residents and jobs back to the city, while transforming formerly impoverished neighborhoods into diverse mixed-income communities.\[^{23}\] While these actors are not a part of the decentralized network of affordable housing developers per se, they employ many of the same strategies as that model, including a reliance on public-private partnership in funding affordable housing projects, and the outsourcing of government-provided housing to non-profit and private developers.\[^{24}\] The rhetoric around these initiatives focuses on the opportunity for neighborhood “renewal” or “transformation,” turning “high poverty neighborhoods into sustainable communities.”\[^{25}\] However, as Lawrence Vale observes in his history of the redevelopment of Chicago’s infamous Cabrini-Green housing project, very few of those who are displaced from public housing have the opportunity to experience life in these higher quality neighborhoods.\[^{26}\] Instead, Vale writes, sites like Cabrini-Green “will fill up with new housing; and there is...little doubt that not much of this housing will serve the residents who once lived in the vanished projects.”\[^{27}\]

A similar dynamic emerges in the Atlanta case, where the pressure of the upcoming Olympic games and an interest in reviving downtown real-estate precipitated the destruction of vast amounts of public housing, ultimately reconstructing fewer below-market units than originally promised.\[^{28}\] These examples underscore the ways in which the public-private partnership model poses a risk of creating outcomes which benefit private investors at the expense of low-income tenants. In this sense, while investment capital for private-public developments is arguably a surer bet than direct funding from ambivalent and undependable federal lawmakers, the promised rewards of these investments do not always accomplish the social goals that are ascribed to them. In some ways, public housing may have been better off, insofar as below-market housing was the central focus of government spending on the program, rather than one small and oft-neglected part of a wider, market-oriented development agenda.

For better or for worse, it seems that the decentralized approach remains the prevailing model for affordable housing development today. Given the shortcomings of some of the early developments produced by the federal public housing program, it is not surprising that national housing policy would favor a program that took responsibility for below-market housing away from central authorities and put it into the hands of community-based groups, non-profits, and private investors. And although, years later the decentralized housing network has seen its share of successes, the struggles encountered by non-profit affordable housing providers fundamentally challenge the idea that the CDC model is a more successful means of producing affordable housing. Like public housing programs, these decentralized approaches to housing production have struggled with cost-limits and onerous levels of regulation, with the realities of racial and economic spatial segregation, and with dependence on outside supporters—this time private investors, rather than the government—which limit the effectiveness of the program in meeting the housing needs of low-income residents. The shortcomings of both movements suggest that the barriers to providing safe, below-market housing lie not in the structure of the programs themselves, but in the “moral ambivalence” of the political and economic contexts in which they are situated.

What is more concerning, perhaps, is that in the process of reconstruction and deconstruction, of revitalization and deconcentration, the constituents who have suffered the most continue to be those with the most to lose—the tenants who rely on housing programs to provide them with stability and a sense of home. While many CDCs have worked to build dignified, de-stigmatized, stable housing for low-income tenants, they continue to struggle with the pitfalls of their tenuous relationship with a housing market that is ultimately less concerned with the fate of low-income residents than in the potential redevelopment of the urban areas where they historically have been housed. The work of CDCs has made major inroads in discovering new and effective ways to develop affordable housing that is functional and supportive of the needs and desires of its residents. The work that remains is to ensure that those who rely on below-market housing can enjoy the benefits of reinvestment, both in new communities and in the neighborhoods they once called home.”
I’m walking down Flushing Avenue on the border of Ridgewood and Bushwick, clipboard in hand, hemmed in on either side by wholesale warehouses, scrapyards and auto body shops. The sidewalks here, where they even exist, are buried beneath mounds of impassable snow, so I’m braving the pocked and rutted roadway, which evokes Baghdad more than Brooklyn, and my right pant leg is soggy up past my ankle. While I always knew I had a knack for discerning between puddles and solid ground, I just discovered this applies only to water, not near-frozen industrial sludge.

I’ve been hired to conduct a survey of industrial business owners in a designated area of Brooklyn. My employer is a nonprofit that administers the city’s IBZs – industrial business zones. These areas were established under Bloomberg in an attempt to turn around, or at least slow, the decline of New York’s once-vibrant industrial sector. The theory, here, is that through tax and financing incentives, along with free, every-step-of-the-way support through the byzantine network of permits, petitions, and filings that attends operating a business in this city, we can prevent industry from being pushed out by larger forces – the paring back of available industrial lots and the associated rise in industrial rents, to name two. The surveys I collect will be compiled into a report we can use to say, effectively, “Hey, decision makers: this many businesses say they may be forced to close, or are looking at relocating outside the five boroughs. They collectively need X and Y and Z. Let’s draft better policy.”

If you don’t see a problem in pulling the plug and letting industry gasp out its last breaths, I hear you. I didn’t ever expect to be advocating on behalf of manufacturing. “Industry,” for me, has always called to mind the depravity of Upton Sinclair’s “Jungle” rather than the street-wise elegance of Jane Jacobs’ “Cities.” My political sympathies, after all, have always lain with the trod-upon, not the tycoon. But here I am: interning for an industrial development organization, bending over backwards to help my employer figure out what bronze foundry needs an abatement, or what tile importer needs a second story expansion. How do I reconcile my identity, heretofore a left-leaning urbanite concerned with social justice, with what reeks of corporate welfare?

Quite easily, as it turns out. Look past the kneejerk distaste for factories and what they represent and you start to see that such a view is emblematic of what writer Josh Tillman skewers as “our ‘progressive’ tendency to scorn ‘provincial’ concepts.” In New York, the industrial sector is largely staffed by immigrants, non-English speakers, and those without formal education. 80% of these workers are people of color. Industrial jobs in Brooklyn and Queens pay, on average, twice as well as their counterparts in the service sector. There’s nothing “progressive” about torpedoing and scapegoating an economic sector that provides a solid pathway into the middle class for historically (and currently) marginalized groups.

That’s, of course, not to give firms a free pass. As Hunter’s own Tom Angotti puts
it, in Progressive Planning, “I’m not out there doing PR work for the manufacturing community, nor do I cover over their bad social, labor, and environmental practices.” But he goes onto highlight that, in addition to the direct employment benefits of the previous paragraph, industry provides for mixed-use neighborhoods, while also serving to “[unconsciously] block gentrification processes.”

Despite best intentions, though, walking into a working industrial operation starts you off at an uphill battle. You know that scene in nearly every episode of Law and Order, where the detectives go up to some guy stacking pallets and ask “Who’s in charge?” to which the guy, not breaking stride, goes “Who’s askin’?” It’s a lot like that, except, as it turns out, foremen are generally less enthusiastic about interrupting their work for survey takers than for cops.

Case in point: a small poultry slaughterhouse sits on a street corner. It seems out of place in this predominantly residential area of Bushwick, occupying the spot you’d expect to be taken by a small bodega or a Chinese takeout joint. There’s no door; I brush aside heavy, translucent PVC strip curtains to enter. Immediately I’m standing among refrigerator-sized cages containing dozens of birds each. If you’ve ever seen one of those displays suburban supermarkets use to sell kickballs, you’ve got the right idea – just replace the pink and purple rubber spheres with writhing, clucking, flightless birds.

The chickens seem to flail and whine more passionately when I walk by than when an employee does. (Do they think an outsider might be more empathetic?) A giant of a man in a black hoodie comes out from behind the scratched-to-hell Plexiglas window, the Chief from “Cuckoo’s Nest” but less chatty and not game to hear about industrial business zoning and what it could mean for him. He stops just short of telling me to leave and watches as I do.

This pattern repeats itself over the weeks. On Troutman Street, the owner of the paper supply company eyeballs the brochure I’ve just handed him and asks where we had them printed; I know instantly that my answer of “not you” just won’t play. He gives me a business card with out-of-date information and I duck under the half-open roll gate back onto the sidewalk.

“It’s too cold,” the iron sculptor says, by way of explanation for why he’s closing the door before I finish my spiel, nearly pinning my scarf in the jamb as he retreats back into his Wilson Street studio. “Sorry you’re out in it all day,” comes trailing behind him from the other side of the heavy door.

A clerk at a Flushing Avenue warehouse gestures to a rear hallway before I can even start speaking – must be the clipboard. I knock and open an already ajar door to find myself interrupting an honest-to-God smoky backroom card game. No one cops to speaking English. I leave.
These businesses can’t be blamed for their skepticism or standoffishness – industry is at once a besieged and forgotten sector in New York, and Brooklyn in particular. The shuttering of the Brooklyn Navy Yard and its 70,000 factory jobs in 1969 was a harbinger of things to come in the ensuing decades, which saw manufacturing jobs dwindle to a rail-thin shadow of their former heft. Pete Hamill of the Daily News, a native son of Brooklyn and former Navy Yard sheet metal worker, put it to New York Magazine that “Brooklyn without the Yard was not Brooklyn,” citing the interconnectedness of firms, all dependent on each other for mutual success.

This move away from manufacturing, toward a service-oriented economy – a cornerstone of the new “global city” – was no accident. While it’s certainly true that the increasingly globalizing economy of the ’70s contributed to firms’ exodus to warmer and cheaper climes, it’s also true that the city didn’t put up much of a fight. The vision for the future – a glassy, glistening city celebrating the primacy of finance, real estate, and tourism – simply had no place for manufacturing.

And so we see this belief codified in policy. The Giuliani years saw the creation of so-called “MX” zoning, which was meant to encourage districts with a mixture of uses but, in practice, allowed for largely unchecked residential and commercial encroachment into historically manufacturing-heavy (or manufacturing only) areas. Bloomberg paid lip service to the needs of industry by establishing the IBZs in 2005, and promptly cut the program’s funding in 2009. In fact, since the inception of the IBZs, areas in North Brooklyn have seen non-industrial land use skyrocket, as much as tripling in certain zones.

With manufacturers now competing for fewer and fewer lots suitable for their trade, even longtime champions of Brooklyn reinvestment are leaving for greener pastures. Brooklyn Brewery, a poster child for the return of industry into the borough since their opening in 1996 in what’s now the Greenpoint-Williamsburg IBZ, recently announced a 200,000 square foot expansion – in Staten Island. Chairman Steve Hindy, a prominent Kings County booster, called the lack of suitable Brooklyn real estate “prohibitive,” and, last year in Crain’s, put in print the question on the minds of many a business owner struggling with the changing landscape of post-Bloomberg North Brooklyn: “What developer will settle for a low-rent
industrial tenant when he can develop housing or rent to a hotel?"

The former site of the Domino Sugar Factory, once the beating economic heart of the Dominican and Puerto Rican Los Sures neighborhood in South Williamsburg, will soon be home to dizzyingly high residential towers and the Vice Media empire’s new, government-subsidized headquarters, which they -- seemingly without irony -- refer to as a “freaky, space-age utopia.” The symbolism of changed collective priority is louder and clearer nowhere else.

It’s not all doom and gloom, though. Rising wages in the developing world along with the growing number of small, boutique firms – picklers and upscale furniture makers are manufacturers the same as refractories and machinery outfits, after all – have seen a growth in domestic industry since 2010. The City Council recently released a report on how the city might help ensure this upswing is the rule rather than the exception. While there’s uncertainty about the de Blasio administration’s commitment on this issue, with his focus on affordable housing as the be-all, end-all urban panacea and his, so far, lack of stance (one manufacturing advocate, upon listening to the mayor’s budget address this year, lamented that “he’s turning out to be even less progressive than Bloomberg”), there’s a case to be made that there’s a present opportunity to make industrial decline less an intractable reality and more a correctable historical artifact.

And sometimes the advocacy goes exactly right. I enter a small, nondescript manufacturing storefront on a small, nondescript block in Bushwick. A man kneels on the concrete floor, crouched over some sort of aluminum structure, welding – no mask. I ask if the boss is around and he points me to the office, where a man whose jumpsuit name patch reads Miguel is looking over a carbon copy.

I introduce myself and give the usual spiel, and, despite my beard and clipboard branded with city agency logos, suggesting I’m a perfect convergence of the gentrifying and politically indifferent forces that have been at odds with his livelihood, he doesn’t disengage; to the contrary, we’re soon talking about the trials of running a business in a changing neighborhood of a changing city.

He’d love a bigger space, but doesn’t think he can afford to. His lease has expired and he’s hanging on month-to-month. Business is slow this year – could it be the weather? I get the feeling he’d talk to me all day if I’d stay, but, after an assurance that this is in no way concerned with his some of his employees’ immigration statuses, he fills out the survey and shakes my hand.

The completed survey stowed safely in my shoulder bag, I exit the shop and return to my beat. Down the block, a man deftly maneuvers a pallet jack around skids laid out on the sidewalk. I ready my clipboard and walk toward him. §
The Highbridge neighborhood in the South Bronx, located in the bluffs above Yankee Stadium and the Harlem River, is a predominantly residential area that has undergone drastic changes in population and demographics over the past century. The population declined dramatically at the peaks of landlord absenteeism during the 1970s and 1980s, when deferred maintenance, drugs, vandalism and crime plagued much of the South Bronx. Major investments in the area in the past decade, including the new billion (plus) dollar Yankee Stadium (that included a Metro North stop) and the soon to be reopened High Bridge, have already increased attention to Highbridge, with its convenient location near major transit nodes, affordable housing stock, and landmarked historic sites.

I propose that a social practice intervention be used as an alternative planning solution to revitalize Highbridge and ensure that renewed attention to the area honors and benefits the current residents. I will begin by defining the study area in Highbridge. I will continue with a discussion of social practice in the arts, its origins, and a few examples. I will identify areas in the sub-district that stand to benefit from a social practice intervention modeled after Creative Time, Project Row Houses and The Power of Place. Finally, I will conclude with a proposal for a social practice intervention that capitalizes on a long documented history of community-initiated improvements in the neighborhood. A social practice intervention in the Highbridge neighborhood of the Bronx will draw on short-term tactics and long-term strategies used by leading practitioners to bring artists and the community together to celebrate the history of the neighborhood, its present state, and its imagined future.

Highbridge, located in Bronx Community District 4, is a hilly residential neighborhood in the central west section of the Bronx, situated on rising land along the Harlem River. Highbridge’s boundaries are generally defined as being the Cross Bronx Expressway to the north, Jerome Avenue to the east, the Macombs Dam Bridge to the south, and the Harlem River and parallel Major Deegan Expressway to the west. The elevated terrain provides open views, in parts, of the Harlem River, South Bronx, and Yankee Stadium. The area was originally settled by Irish workers who came to build the neighborhood’s namesake bridge, completed in 1848. Rapid deindustrialization after World War II, suburbanization, urban renewal policies, disinvestment and redlining of much of the Bronx all contributed to an economic downturn in the area that only began to stabilize in the 1980s. The effects on the neighborhood were devastating; properties were neglected, abandoned and vandalized, poverty increased, as did crime.

Today, Highbridge is a diverse community with over 90 percent minority residence, two-thirds of those residents being Hispanic and Latino. Many of the newest residents in Highbridge are immigrants from the Dominican Republic and western Africa. Community Board 4 has the third lowest median household income level in all of New York City ($26,934) therefore maintaining the affordability of the renter dominated neighborhood, while creating opportunities for economic growth are essential for fostering the revitalization of Highbridge.

Ogden Avenue is the main commercial artery that runs north/south through the residential neighborhood. This paper will examine the areas that surround the commercial corridor on Ogden Avenue, from 162nd Street to 166th Street. This stretch was selected for the study area because of symbolic status as a center for the neighborhood, and because of the opportunities for improvement. First, Ogden Avenue acts as a transit connector: the Bx13 bus runs north/south along the street, connecting residents to Upper Manhattan in one direction and to Yankee Stadium’s 4, B, D, and Metro North trains (and beyond), in the other. Second, Ogden Avenue has a C4-1 commercial overlay that allows for local retail establishments in an area that is otherwise zoned for residential uses. Beauty salons, restaurants, pharmacies, grocery stores and general stores are some of the retail found on the Avenue. Third, Ogden Avenue is home to some of the important community organizations based in Highbridge that will be integral collaborators in a social art practice intervention, including the Taqwa Community Farm and the (former) Highbridge Community Life Center. Finally, Ogden Avenue has underutilized land, sectioned off with uninviting wire fencing,
interspersed with shuttered storefronts that are ripe for activation with a social practice intervention.

Social practice in art, sometimes called participatory art, community art, among other names, is politically and socially engaged artistic practice that is collaborative and takes place in situ. Instead of using the traditional settings of an artist’s studio, a gallery or a museum for producing art, non traditional spaces are used. The artist/spectator dichotomy is disrupted in social art practice by using a collaborative process. The “artist” engages participants (formerly “spectators”) as co-producers, with the new setting as the “gallery”. The line between the artist and the spectator are blurred as the artist activates individuals, communities, institutions, or a combination of these, to produce what art historian Claire Bishop calls ‘situations.’ Collaboration is a necessary part of social art practice as it is the participants who “constitute the central artistic medium and material.”

The exact origin of the movement of social practice is hard to pinpoint. Some art historians cite the emergence of site-specific art in the sixties and seventies as the beginning of the practice, as artists increasingly moved out of their studios, on their own initiative, or on commissions, to create pieces in situ. Bishop theorizes that in a Western context, at least, the return to the social in art is generally coupled with political upheaval. The points of transformation in the past century, she goes on, were the avant-garde movement in Europe in 1917, the ‘neo’ avant-garde leading to protests in 1968, and the fall of communism in 1989. The practice of social art spread exponentially in the 1990s in western and non-western contexts, as part of a “shared set of desires to overturn the traditional relationship between the art object, the artist and the audience.”

Creative Time is a New York based non-profit arts organization that uses temporary tactics to explore space and place as a topic in their projects. They commission artists to create temporary, site-specific works of art, with a specific social mission, in carefully selected public and semi-public spaces. Funk, God, Jazz and Medicine did exactly this; visitors straddling several worlds (from academics, to artists, to students, to workers) came together in a place they may not have visited otherwise and were exposed to a social history of Brooklyn that is not widely known (even among nearby residents).

The project is reminiscent of Dolores Hayden’s non-profit, The Power of Place, founded in in Los Angeles in the 1980s. The Biddie Mason project combined public history and public art to commemorate Biddie Mason, a working-class, African-American midwife and historic homesteader in what is now downtown Los Angeles. In the absence of a physical structure (Mason’s home- stead had long been a parking lot), The Power of Place devised a five-part project that included visiting artists studios, homes for single mothers, and vernacular housing typology, while providing necessary services, including visiting artists studios, homes for single mothers, and educational programming. PRH situates their work at “the intersections between art, historic preservation, affordable and innovative housing, community relations and development, neighborhood revitalization, and human empowerment.” They work to transform the community by integrating art practice and placemaking.

One of the powers of site-specific art is that the collaborative process gives attention to marginalized voices. According to art historian and educator Miwon Kwon, site-specific art “can lead to the unearthing of repressed histories, provide greater visibility of marginalized groups and issues, and initiate the re(dis)covery of ‘minor’ places so far ignored by the dominant culture.” Funk, God, Jazz and Medicine did exactly this; visitors straddling several worlds (from academics, to artists, to students, to workers) came together in a place they may not have visited otherwise and were exposed to a social history of Brooklyn that is not widely known (even among nearby residents).

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The upcoming opening of the High Bridge slated for summer 2015 will likely draw new visitors Highbridge, making it...
a perfect time to stage an installation in the neighborhood. An intervention in Highbridge should proceed in two phases, combining the temporary tactics of Creative Time and the long-term strategy of Project Row Houses and The Power of Place.

In the first phase, artists could be invited to collaborate with area residents and community organizations to devise a multiweek event fashioned after Funk, God, Jazz and Medicine. Potential sites for installations include the landmarked Highbridge-Woodycrest Center (Woodycrest Avenue at 161st), the former H.W. Wilson Company building, now corporate headquarters for Tuck-It-Away Storage (950 University Avenue), Taqwa Community Garden (Ogden and 164th), vacant lots on Ogden and 163rd and 165th Streets, and the homesteaded apartments on Summit Avenue and 164th. Using Creative Time as a model, artists would be partnered with different community groups working in the area to create a site-specific project that explores the history of the neighborhood and imagine what the future could look like.

Dedicated residents have a long history of initiating projects to ameliorate the neighborhood. In the 1970s and early 1980s, residents, many from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, successfully homesteaded properties that had been long neglected by their owners. Taqwa Community Farm (164th Street and Ogden Ave) was established in 1992 by Abu Talib, who was tired of seeing the city owned, vacant lot fill up with garbage, and took initiative to clear it out and transform it. With the help of friends and family, Talib worked to clear the plot of land and have nurtured it into a thriving urban farm.

Residents should be encouraged to participate in imagining improvements they would like to see along Ogden’s retail corridor, as this will be the main thoroughfare for visitors to the area. The initial phase of the project would encourage visitors to the High Bridge and Yankee Stadium into the study area to discover its vibrant past and vision for the future. Having the short-term phase of the intervention centered on Ogden will be the precursor to a more comprehensive economic revitalization of the street to make a more attractive corridor with more jobs for residents.

The second phase of the intervention in Highbridge would select a permanent site to be a hub for neighborhood activity in the future, modeled after Project Row Houses. A possible site for this is the former Highbridge Community Life Center, which closed in September 2014 due to economic and budget problems. One of the popular services the Center provided was free language classes. Residents already know the site for the provision of important services. The social practice intervention would honor and build on the Center’s legacy, maintaining a permanent space for the incubation of future projects.

Some question whether the impact of social art practice is real or more symbolic in nature. One disadvantage of the form is that generally, the projects that emerge are temporary, “partly because the commission is defined by a unique set of geographical and temporal circumstance and partly because the project is dependent on unpredictable and unprogrammable on-site relations.” The lasting impacts of Creative Time’s temporary projects, for example, are incredibly hard to quantify; their power and legacy lies in the fact that a marginalized history has become a little better known and can be spread exponentially through the visitors it impacted. Power of Place and Project Row Houses offer a model that has more physical permanence.

Using a social practice intervention in Highbridge that combines short-term tactics and long-term strategies would return underused space to productive use while nurturing visions for the future. Deploying such an intervention could mark the neighborhood as a destination in itself, inviting visitors to the nearby Yankee Stadium and the High Bridge to linger, instead of just passing through to either destination. The results could be profoundly validating of hard-work of dedicated residents who are continually engaged in improving their neighborhood.
In 1979, The National Endowment for the Arts selected New York-based Minimalist Richard Serra to develop a sculpture for the newly renovated Jacob K. Javits Federal Building in downtown Manhattan. Two years later, he erected *Tilted Arc* (Figures #1, #2, & #3), a work made out of 73 tons of COR-TEN steel; it stood at 120 feet in length, 12 feet in height, and a base-to-tip slope ratio of 12:1 oriented toward the viewer. The surface was unpainted and rusting. Serra explained that the work was intended to “disrupt or alter the decorative form of the plaza,” which it indisputably accomplished. The sculpture obstructed views and redirected pedestrian traffic in the plaza – forcing all passers to confront his vision. Such a creation by Serra was not surprising. He was already internationally recognized for advancing Minimalism in sculpture, by bringing large, site-specific steel works to upstate New York, Philadelphia, and Ontario.

The work generated immediate uproar from white-collar workers in the area, who organized for its removal. These efforts were met with pushback from the artistic community, which deemed such a removal an oppressive form of “government censorship.” The controversy spawned a series of public hearings and a lawsuit, in which questions of artistic license, community involvement, the relationship between the government and the arts, and public security were hotly debated.

Art historians have studied the controversy, with an emphasis on censorship, the relationship between artist and patron, and the challenges of creating art outside of a specialized space. In my analysis, I will attempt to address the public policy and urban arts implications of the removal of *Tilted Arc*. Changes to federal arts policy since the controversy have shifted artistic choices to local officials – a correct and logical switch. While the process need not be fully democratic, urban design should ultimately be beholden to the interests of its user. Still, the handling of this particular case is troublesome. I believe that the sculpture should not have been removed, as it may have set a dangerous precedent for future innovation in public art.

**BACKGROUND & POLICY HISTORY**

Founded in 1962 by President Lyndon B. Johnson, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) represented the largest federal commitment to arts patronage since the Great Depression. The NEA received bipartisan support during its initial decades, and Republican President Richard M. Nixon oversaw an eighteen-fold increase in its budget. In 1972, Nixon (working with powerful NEA Chairperson Nancy Hanks) granted the NEA the power to oversee and advise the addition of art for public consumption by the General Services Administration. The project was named the Arts in Architecture program.

In the decade that followed, the GSA worked with NEA-selected artists to place murals, sculp-
tures, and landscape features across the country. While most works were praised, more abstract works such as *Landscape of Time* by Isamu Noguchi (1975) in Seattle and *Baltimore Federal* by George Sugarman (1978) were met with divided reviews (Figure #4). In 1978, the NEA and GSA held hearings regarding *Baltimore Federal*, a large metal sculpture installed outside a federal office building in Baltimore. Tenants of the office building criticized the work as overly colorful, a potential hiding place for explosives, and a potential pulpit for protests. The media, art community, and politicians pushed back and ardently defended the work. The GSA correctly chose to keep the sculpture, which is now adored by most tourists and plaza users.

In 1981, *Tilted Arc* was met with even greater uproar, for which similar hearings would be far more contentious.

**KEY ACTORS**

The subsequent eight years would consist of informal debates, media coverage, public hearings, and a lengthy legal process. Key stakeholders driving these actions were the workers in the area, the art community, the federal agencies (GSA and NEA), and the local media. In 2008, the NEA referred to the controversy as “local” in nature, with white-collar workers making up the opposition and the New York art community making up the support. Based on media coverage from the 1980s, local politicians (including Mayor Ed Koch) lacked strong opinions on the issue. Led by Richard Serra, the art community rallied in support of the work and protections for federally sponsored artists. Local media, including *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Village Voice* dramatized the controversy before and during the hearings, with some art historians claiming that these periodicals held general biases against Minimalist art.

**ISSUES**

The site of the sculpture provided the greatest point of contention for both sides of the debate. Like many of his previous and subsequent works, Serra considered *Tilted Arc* to be “site-specific.” He explained the concept by declaring that “to remove” *Tilted Arc* from the plaza “would be to destroy it.” The site certainly made the work more dramatic. The structure bisected a major pedestrian plaza and obstructed views of both the Modernist Jacob K. Javits Federal Building and the colonnade formed by courthouses around Foley Square, which was inspired by the early twentieth-century City Beautiful architectural movement. It shamelessly disrupted the traditionally designed plaza with a nontraditional, towering barrier. Serra’s minimalist, imposing sculpture referenced the anarchism of the 1960s, by obstructing the historicizing nature of the legal buildings and the entrances to government buildings. Such a work is typical of Minimalism, which seeks to convey meaning through a rejection of symbolic, decorative, and representational forms in favor of basic and geometrized renderings. Proponents of such works argue that they challenge the viewer to consider one’s relationship to the site through an existentialist lens.

The central public policy and urban planning issues raised during the controversy involved the level of community involvement in urban design and “ownership” of publicly used spaces. To what extent should the federal government involve the impacted community in the placement of public art? Are non-resident workers part of this community? Most importantly: did Serra take full ownership of the space once he accepted the commission? The controversy forced the federal government to face these questions and adjust its policies in response.

**THE ARGUMENTS & THE RESOLUTION**

The testimonies made at the 1985 hearings articulate the disparate views of these issues. A GSA-appointed board of five, which had the power to remove the sculpture, oversaw the hearings. These board had experience with policymaking and art purchasing, but none of them had background in urban design or art history. One hundred eighty people spoke at the hearings, with more than two-thirds of speakers supporting *Tilted Arc*.

Most area employees argued that the federal government overreached in its development of art without involvement of users of the space. An employee in the Javits Building argued that the government supported “self-serving artists and so-called pseudo intellectuals” over the community. A federal attorney who worked nearby lamented the “distant memories” of the plaza as a space for gathering for local workers and recommended the work be placed in the Hudson River to serve as a shelter for striped bass. Another Javits Building employee argued that the federal government’s failure to understand local communities in New York City echoed the government’s failure to understand communities in Vietnam in the preceding decades.
The art community responded with testimony that the work vivified the space and incorporated the community. Prominent artists like Keith Haring and Claes Oldenburg spoke in Serra’s defense. William Rubin, a director at The Museum of Modern Art, argued that “popular” interests should not shape art. He argued that great works were often unpopular in their time, because “the broader public” had yet to learn the “artistic language.” In his understanding, Tilted Arc involved the community in the best possible way, as it forced the workers to reevaluate their surroundings. “Father of Minimalism” Frank Stella argued that the federal policy should support artistic innovation over the whims of the public and that the work had the potential to build community. Serra harshly and personally attacked his critics, claiming that bureaucrats impartially selected him as the most qualified artist to create a site-specific work for the area. He vehemently opposed moving the work, aggressively declaring that Tilted Arc was “created in relation to the particular conditions of a specific site.”

After days of deliberation, the GSA board voted four to one to remove Tilted Arc. Serra sued, claiming that his contract had been violated. Following four years of rulings and appeals, a federal judge ruled that Serra had no legitimate claim to his work once constructed and, therefore, no legal cause of action. The work was removed in the early hours of March 15, 1989. It is currently in pieces in a GSA warehouse in Maryland. As Richard Serra will not display the work outside of its intended location, Tilted Arc will probably never be exhibited.

**IMPLICATIONS & SIGNIFICANCE**

Serra failed to understand the views of his critics. When an artist leaves a gallery space to enter “the expanded field,” he or she is subject to broader criticism and challenges – especially when the work alters people’s daily lives. The people who complained made legitimate points about how government sponsored artwork that alters the landscape should have some level of public input. Changes were certainly necessary for future works.

Nevertheless, the GSA mishandled this situation. Tilted Arc should not have been removed. Based on the uptick in general opinions regarding Baltimore Federal and Minimalism, I believe that Tilted Arc would have become more appreciated over time. Serra continues to create similar public sculptures around the world (including in California, Germany, England, and Qatar), which are met with much warmer reception. The inappropriate removal signifies the government’s favoring censorship and opposition over artistic innovation.

As a direct result of the controversy, the GSA redesigned the Arts in Architecture program. Local governments were given the power to select the artists for projects, with NEA strictly serving in an advisory role. Furthermore, the architect of a site was empowered to set parameters regarding the public works. The former change sought to increase community involvement, drawn from the apt logic that local legislators represent the needs of a community better than federal bureaucrats. The latter change meant to ensure that public artwork seamlessly integrated into the character of the community’s landscape. The second change is less appropriate; works that defy the harmonious esthetics may be more exciting and do not necessarily disrupt the overall design of space.

In the years following the controversy, the GSA began to favor representational art over abstract art. The New York Times refers to subsequent works as “more upbeat” than works of the 1970s and 1980s. The GSA maintains that the shift was reflective of trends in the arts of the United States rather than a specific result of Tilted Arc.

The United States Congress quietly responded to critics of the work’s removal by altering the Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) in 1990 with unanimous support in both Houses. The changes to VARA codified “moral rights” to protect artists from mutilation, alteration, or removal of their works of public art. Such a change is likewise fitting, as it prevents the government from stymying artistic license. Copyright lawyers argue that the statute would have protected a work like Tilted Arc from removal; in 2006, Kent Twitchell was awarded over $1 million from the federal government for the destruction of his mural on the exterior of a federal building.

**CONCLUSION**

Further NEA controversies followed *Tilted Arc*, notably the federal sponsorship of a photograph by artist Andres Serrano depicting a crucifix in a glass of urine in 1987. Reactions to controversial works codified (both in formal policy decisions and in government practices) the idea that public art and public space should be beholden to the values of those using the space rather than contest these values. Such a shift is evidenced in the redirection of funding streams toward more traditional forms and the implementation of a bottom-up structure for public art. For better or for worse, art as daring, challenging, and controversial as *Tilted Arc* would not be federally sponsored in the current sociopolitical climate. §
Hidden Cost of the High Life

How High-Rise Condo Developments Undermine New York’s Economic Sustainability
by Nathan Heffron

Real estate has defined New York City since its inception. The shape of the city was sculpted by a combination of the physical geography of the area along with planning that facilitated the real estate process. The street grid plan for Manhattan in 1811 was central to this, dividing the island into equally sized parcels for buying and selling.[1] Indeed, real estate is intimately tied to the economic wellbeing of New York, and it does not operate in a vacuum. The market is intertwined with trends and phenomena that occur on national and global scales.

This process has produced the spectacle of the city that we know today. In that time, the city has seen ages of prodigious growth and astounding investment leading to the extraordinary architectural and engineering feats that we still see today. It has also seen times of disinvestment and despair, complete with social volatility and economic hardship. As we will see, the trends that produce these conditions can be situated within broader and more abstract trends in the global political economy.

New York’s real estate market today can easily be considered to be going through a boom phase. Real estate investment in the city combined with the global demand for housing has raised the cost of living to exorbitant levels. Furthermore, the housing demand for the extremely wealthy is producing a new phenomenon, one characterized by super high-rise condominium buildings close to the Midtown central business district (CBD) and Central Park. Such a trend has not been seen in New York since the age of “Millionaire’s Mile,” a stretch of mansions along Fifth Avenue early in the Twentieth Century. This essay seeks to place both the Gilded Age and current housing trends into models of long-wave economic fluctuations presented by Kondratieff and Kuznets and asks the question of whether this process is economically sustainable in the long term.
“MILLIONAIRE’S MILE AND THE SPINE OF GOTHAM”

The sociopolitical atmosphere of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries was in many ways similar to that of today. It was an era that was characterized by extreme capital accumulation by the nation’s elite. The disparity of wealth between the nation’s most affluent and the working masses was vast. It was also a time of robust economic expansion. Cities across the nation were industrializing rapidly, and this was largely responsible for the wealth disparity. This age became known as that of the “robber barons,” those who belonged to the elite families who controlled the booming industries that generated wealth.

During this period, New York City thrived both socially and economically. The city had already assumed its position as the dominant financial center of the United States and was seeing immense numbers of European immigrants and African Americans from the South migrating to the city. The population of the city was exploding, with high crowding in many neighborhoods. The Lower East Side (LES) had become the most densely populated area on planet with streets that were alive with the vibrancy that the new migrant populations brought to the city. Immigrant populations arrived in New York with expectations of economic opportunity and, indeed, opportunities abounded.

Such a rapidly expanding city requires the turnover of space to allow for the great changes occurring within it. With such change and expansion came the loss of architecturally significant buildings in a time well before formal historic preservation. This led Henry James to give New York the title of “provisional city.” The provisional city was one that demolished old uses, no matter how historically significant, to make way for the new uses of the time. The rapid churn in the built environment caused calls for the preservation of historic structures to become a reoccurring theme throughout the Twentieth Century.

The turnover of classic architecture was not just giving way to high density living arrangements, but was giving way to another sign of the times. Certain areas, especially along Fifth Avenue in Midtown and eventually toward the Upper East Side (UES), saw an influx of grandiose mansions. Fifth Avenue became known by a variety of names, including “Millionaire’s Mile” and “The Spine of Gotham,” so named because it was home to the city’s most affluent and well-to-do families. Many of these residents were the infamous robber barons: names such as Vanderbilt, Carnegie, and Frick were listed on addresses on Fifth Avenue. Likewise, commercial entities began to reflect this demographic change with the introduction of upscale retailers and department stores. Fifth Avenue was quickly becoming the marquee stretch of prominent real estate not just in New York City, but in the entire world.

The fascinating developments of the early 1900s yielded both the spectacularly ornate mansions of Fifth Avenue and the intensely crowded tenements of the LES. The metropolis being produced was one marked by the clear economic inequalities of the time. Though employment was plentiful, the crowded conditions that the working classes of the city were exposed to presented a threat to public health and sanitation. Meanwhile, the city’s CBD was being transformed into a site of opulence and extravagance, with mansions that would appear to be the antithesis of a highly dense and crowded city.

THE ECONOMIC PENDULUM: KONDRATIEFF & KUZNETS

This boom time would not last forever. The stock market crash of 1929 brought New York’s era of tremendous development to an end. The robust expansion of industry and commerce ground to a halt, leading to the worst economic depression in the nation’s history. Unemployment reached staggering levels and homelessness rose significantly. The United States would not fully come out of this depression until World War II.

Several economic theorists, especially following the Great Depression, attempted to uncover the cause of such massive economic downturns. Nikolai Kondratieff was among the first to theorize a long-wave model of capitalist economic development. The long wave theory maintains that the economy progresses through a series of peaks and troughs, which, according to Kondratieff, last roughly fifty to sixty years from peak to peak. The peaks are characterized by times of relative tranquility and economic prosperity. The troughs consist of severe economic depression, as was the case following the 1929 crash. Another economist, Joseph Schumpeter, picked up on the long wave theory model presented by Kondratieff. The wave cycle as interpreted by Schumpeter followed a path of prosperity, recession, depression, and finally, recovery. In these theories, the Great Depression was a natural occurrence in the progression of an industrialized capitalist economy.

By running statistical analyses on various economic indicators, Kondratieff was able to remove short-term economic fluctuations and other irregularities from his long wave model. He found two long wave cycles starting around the time of the Industrial Revolution. The first had an upswing from about 1789 to 1814 and a downswing from 1814 to 1849. The next picked up and peaked in 1873 and then declined until 1896. The periods of the upswing were characterized by eras of high investment, low interest rates, and a higher propensity for individuals and organizations to save money. The downswings were simply the opposite: low investment, higher interest rates, an inability to save, and higher unemployment. However, the amount of data
available to him was limited, so he was uncertain as to whether his results achieved statistical significance.

Kondratieff’s work went largely incomplete. He also had his fair share of critics—including the Soviet state, which banished him to Siberia in 1928. His long wave models still did not account for many of the much shorter economic upswings and downswings. As an answer to these critiques, Simon Kuznets presented a similar wave model that had much shorter waves than Kondratieff’s, about 22 years per cycle. While Kondratieff’s waves were based largely on the actions of business and capital, Kuznets’s swings are based in technological advancements and infrastructure investment. In Kuznets’s theory, a technological advancement, most often in transportation, leads to a time of public investment in infrastructure to accommodate the new technology. Eventually the investment subsides, leading to an economic downswing much less abrupt than the ones suggested by Kondratieff.

Throughout these economic fluctuations, we can see the close relationship between the state of the economy and real estate. Periods of economic prosperity see high investment in and increasing valuation of real estate and times of hardship see the opposite. New York during the age of the robber barons and Fifth Avenue mansions was one such time when investment, land values, and income inequality were high. Although the early Twentieth Century was among the “peak” periods in the aforementioned models, it was ripe for the conditions that led to the Great Depression and a period of stagnation for New York City. As we shall see, current housing and real estate trends in the city are remarkably similar to those during that time. Thus, it is worthwhile to analyze the current housing landscape to determine if history will repeat itself.

EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY NYC: AGE OF THE SUPER HIGH-RISE AND PIED-Á-TERRÉ

If only Richard Sennett could today perform the same walk he did when he wrote The Conscience of the Eye. The UES that his trip ended in would look radically different from the time in which he originally trekked from Lower Manhattan. The neighborhood is now among the most desirable in the city, with astronomical land values, upscale retail and dining, and residential buildings that have grown as tall as the rent is high. There is overwhelming demand to live in not just this corner of Manhattan but in all of New York City. This was unfathomable only a few decades ago. The better part of the Twentieth Century in America was defined by strong anti-urban biases, residential segregation, white middle class flight to the suburbs, slum clearance and urban renewal, and automobile-centric planning. People and their employers fled to the periphery of urban areas. In New York, these national trends led to an era marked by physical decay and social upheaval in the 1960s and 70s. This decay and upheaval still dominates life in most American cities. So how did living in New York’s dense urban environment become so highly sought after?

Matthew Lasner explores this question in High Life: Condo Living in the Suburban Century. The notion of condominium ownership balances the desire to own property with the ability to live in close proximity to trendy centers of employment and activity. Condo ownership and cooperative ownership are alternative views to the traditional notion of homeownership. They allow for higher density living arrangements as the costs of building maintenance are distributed amongst the owners of the units. Seen by some as a democratic form of ownership, the condominium is an avenue for the elite and affluent to have a desirable living arrangement in close proximity to work and play.

The persistence of New York as the dominant financial and media capital of the globe, coupled with newer forms of urban homeownership, has increased the demand for high-grade housing. The relationship is mutual and symbiotic: firms desire a central location to draw upon the greatest labor pool and individuals seek accessibility to employment. This concept is fundamental to the operation of real estate in cities. Additionally, investors from abroad have come to view New York City real estate as a safe and lucrative place to park their money. Units purchased in the city may not necessarily be used as a full-time residence. Such a unit is referred to as a pied-á-terre, French for “foot on the ground.” Non-city residents may own property in the city yet only occupy the units during certain times of the year. These forces have gradually pushed New York into an economic upswing rivaling that of the late Nineteenth Century.

In these new boom times we are beginning to witness the literal rise of a new sort of housing—the super high-rise. Examples of these eye-catching structures include the recently completed One57 on West 57th Street and 432 Park Avenue, which is expected to be completed in late 2015. These towers are rising in an area along the south side of Central Park in Midtown and in the UES, which some have begun to call the “Billionaire’s Belt.” They consist of the highest order of housing for the world’s wealthiest individuals. For example, an 8,255 square foot penthouse in 432 Park Avenue has sold for $79.5 million. The unit consists of the entire 92nd floor of what will be the nearly 1,400 foot tall skyscraper—higher than the Empire State Building. Its fixtures and furnishings are expected to be provided accordingly for the asking price of the unit. Several more even taller structures are either beginning construction or will soon be underway in the near future.
A LOOMING CRISIS OF DEMAND
The Great Recession of 2008 was the most severe global economic downturn since the Great Depression. This economic disaster originated in real estate markets as new homeowners could no longer afford mortgage payments when their introductory interest rates rose. The ensuing collapse of the real estate market left many homes less valuable than the mortgage. While the full complexity of the 2008 crash cannot be captured here, it is important to note that New York City suffered less damage from this economic implosion than most other urban areas. Since the crash largely affected home and property owners, New York was buffered by the fact that most of its inhabitants rent their homes—an anomaly for the United States.[18]

As the city’s economy resumes growth and new high-paying positions are created, demand also increases for service sector positions for the consumptive demands of the high-wage earners. The level of consumption that is afforded by the accumulated wealth of the elite requires myriad service sector laborers, including but not limited to construction, retail, food service, health care, childcare, and domestic work.[19] In order to prevent the price of these goods and services from inflating to prohibitive levels, service sector laborers must be paid reasonable wages to live within commutable distance to their places of employment. Since the demand for housing in New York is so extreme—and is global in nature—the cost of even the most derelict housing is becoming out of reach for those in the working and lower classes. Immigration of all classes adds to this demand.

The extreme demand for housing along with the very limited creation of new moderately priced units in New York City is the driving force behind the high cost of housing in the city. The city is in the midst of a crisis of supply, as Kondratief would put it, and this is a characteristic of an economic upswing of the type he suggested. However, if prices continue to rise unabated, they will eventually rise far beyond the means of the average service worker, setting the stage for a crisis of demand that could spell the end of this prosperous heyday of real estate in New York. This would lead to a cascade of negative consequences, as the inability of service sector workers to live within a reasonable commuting distance of their jobs will make it difficult if not impossible for them to provide services at all. Thus, the current economic prosperity will come to an end when it becomes truly impossible for people of modest means to be able to live in the city and access its mass transit system.

CONCLUSION
Fortunately, the aforementioned process does not occur in a vacuum. Affordable housing provisions such as public housing, inclusionary zoning, and rent subsidization prevent the most socioeconomically vulnerable populations from being forced out of the city. And New York’s comprehensive transportation network extends the commutable distance to far-reaching areas where the price of housing is lower. Nevertheless, the powerful forces of the real estate market may be driving the city to another economic collapse. If history and the long wave economic models have taught us anything, it is that the trends that are now occurring in New York City real estate are quite similar to the state that they were in preceding the Great Depression. Income and wealth inequality are as great as they were during the age of the “Millionaire’s Mile.” These wealth disparities have led profit-seeking developers to engage in the intensive addition of luxury units in trendy neighborhoods at the expense of new housing supply for ordinary New Yorkers. The physical manifestation of our new Gilded Age is the new architectural typology of the super high-rise.

Although New York was largely immune from the economic downturn of 2008, the city may not be so fortunate once the next economic perturbation occurs. If consumption of goods, services, and housing drops because prices have become so exorbitant, we will no longer have a crisis of supply—we will have a crisis of demand—the economic pendulum will swing in the other direction as Kondratieff and Kuznets’s models predict. To ensure that New York will continue to thrive in an economically sustainable manner, policy that intervenes into the natural market forces must become a priority. This can be done by addressing pieds-à-terre and other excessive living arrangements of the ultra-wealthy, as well as increasing the supply of housing that is within the reach of the middle and working classes. It is not just a moral imperative to ensure housing for all, but it is economically critical as well.§

Photo courtesy of 432parkavenue.com.
Connecting the Point(s) is a year-long study being conducted in the Hunts Point neighborhood of the South Bronx, from the Fall of 2014 through the Spring of 2015. Hunts Point is home to approximately 12,000 residents and hundreds of businesses. Our goal is to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations that seek to promote environmental justice and improve quality of life for the residents who call this neighborhood home and the workers who travel there every day. We are focusing our research and analysis on three key areas:

1. Re-envisioning vacant and underutilized space
2. Improving access to healthy and affordable food
3. Increasing connectivity to parks and open space

The health, poverty, and environmental struggles of the South Bronx have been well documented. Because of this, Hunts Point is a notoriously “over-planned” neighborhood, with multiple plans by various city agencies currently somewhere between promise and completion. Our client is Sustainable South Bronx, which works to address economic and environmental issues in the South Bronx. They tasked us with developing feasible, fundable recommendations that can actually be brought to fruition by community members. The community doesn’t need yet another grand plan to sit on the shelf.

We began by analyzing publicly available data about the Hunts Point neighborhood. We followed this up by reviewing past planning efforts in the neighborhood and reaching out to community members, experts, and stakeholders. Of the many issues and assets that were identified in our research and outreach, we chose to address the issues that were identified most often and that we felt have the most feasible solutions. These issues include connectivity to parks and open space, access to healthy foods, and reuse of vacant land.

We began our field research with a Community Preference Mapping exercise. We went out on the streets of Hunts Point and asked residents to identify on a map the areas of Hunts Point which they felt were enjoyable and well maintained and which were unkempt and unsafe. This exercise allowed us to gain a sense of the character and the idiosyncrasies of the neighborhood. We then began what would be the centerpiece of our studio’s field research: a vacant lot survey. Over a period of several months, we walked each block of Hunts Point and surveyed each vacant lot. We identified each site’s characteristics: whether it was paved or overgrown, in use by an active nearby business, being used illegally for the storage of cars or dumping, or completely empty. We then cross referenced our data with city data, identifying ownership and zoning district, and produced a map of all of the vacant lots in the Hunts Point. This map was used at our community meeting in March, where we engaged community members about their vision for the vacant lots in their neighborhood.

We also developed a Connectivity Survey, a 23 question survey designed to gather data about access to healthy food and parks in Hunts Point. This survey provided valuable hyper-local data about access and connectivity issues. It was designed so that it can continue to be used by our client and other community based organizations to gather data in the future about these important issues facing the neighborhood.

At the time of writing, the Hunts Point Studio is in the process of developing recommendations based on the data we have gathered from our research and input from the community. To follow our journey and view our final report, please visit huntspointstudio.org.
New York City pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists have known Queens Boulevard as the “Boulevard of Death” for far too long. Working with Transportation Alternatives Queens (TAQ), our studio’s challenge is to reimagine Queens Boulevard as something other than a highway-like urban safety hazard.

Fewer people are being injured or killed there today, but lowering the speed limit, retiming some signals, and other mainstream transportation interventions haven’t done enough. Cars still rule, and people who walk and bike there still feel unsafe. But the qualities that make Queens Boulevard disorganized go beyond transportation—in addition to being unsafe, it’s intimidating and unwelcoming and it doesn’t reflect the diverse and vibrant communities clustered around it.

Our studio is looking at the corridor not just as an arterial street, but as a place where people live, work, shop, and meet up with friends. We’re looking at urban design, business activity, land use, and demographics around Queens Boulevard to guide our recommendations. For example, we found that the senior population is especially high in the census tracts immediately surrounding the street. Findings like this will inform our report.

Based on crash data and other input from TAQ, we selected three focus areas: Sunnyside, the retail malls in Elmhurst and Rego Park, and Forest Hills. At a meeting with TAQ, we learned that safety problems persist around LaGuardia Community College even after engineering interventions by DOT. So we’re also doing a limited case study of this area to see what else can be done.

As we refine our recommendations, we’re reviewing how other urban centers have used design, policy, and technology to create special, accessible places that are inviting to residents and visitors alike, regardless of the mode of transportation they use. We’re talking to experts such as Matthew Roe, formerly of DOT’s safety office and currently the Designing Cities director for the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), and “Gridlock Sam” Schwartz, who tried to put a contraflow bus lane on Queens Boulevard more than 40 years ago. But most importantly, we are talking to the people who use Queens Boulevard to find out what frustrates them most and learn what changes they want to see in the area.

We’ve taken several different approaches to public involvement. First, of course, we’ve listened to our client, a group with deep roots in and knowledge of the community. We also used an interactive survey for our Forest Hills study area that several members of our studio created for their Public Participation GIS class. In January 2015, we attended a DOT workshop for Queens Boulevard. The workshop focused on a specific stretch from Roosevelt Avenue to 73rd Street. While it wasn’t perfectly aligned with our focus areas, we still got a good sense of residents’ concerns and hopes.

In March, we held two workshops of our own at the Rego Park Senior Center and at Queens Borough Hall. These informative and interactive events were designed to specifically target our focus areas. During the first exercise, participants identified locations they felt were either unsafe or safe and provided explanatory comments. This input reinforced something we learned at the DOT workshop: that certain changes, such as turn bans, can have significant impacts on local residential side streets. This discovery led us to widen our focus in order to consider the impacts on the larger community in our recommendations.

We shared images from celebrated transportation corridors in other parts of the city, such as Ocean Parkway and Eastern Parkway, as well as from all over the world. We also provided a list of values to help participants articulate what they truly would like to see on Queens Boulevard.

The input we received from the workshops was valuable and our planning process would not be complete without it. But we also learned that planning public events can be a challenge. Reaching potential participants required some ingenuity. Bad weather threatened to derail one workshop, although, fortunately, it held off until the following day. We had to stay flexible right up until the time the event started. But this, like other aspects of the studio, has been a great lesson in the way planning works in the real world.
The Regional Plan Association (RPA) is a non-profit organization established in 1922. Focusing on the New York metropolitan region, RPA's primary focus is on developing long-range regional plans. The organization also researches the area's transportation, economic development, and environmental sustainability issues, and conducts advocacy. The “Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs” of 1929 was the first document to recognize a wider metropolitan region that included parts of Connecticut and New Jersey. Today, the RPA’s jurisdiction spans 3 states, 31 counties, and more than 800 municipalities in the tri-state region.

RPA is currently developing its fourth regional plan, of which sustainability and quality of life issues are prominent concerns. Our studio is in the process of assisting RPA’s Parks and Landscapes Working Group, whose primary objective is to “Ensure that all residents have adequate access to quality open spaces and recreational opportunities, and that regions open spaces and urban centers are connected with regional trail, greenway, and blueway networks.”

Providing access to trailways across such a vast, densely-populated area is no small feat. Our studio faces significant challenges in accomplishing this goal. Primary among these are the scale and size of the geography and the difficulty of regional planning in the New York metro area. The enormity of the RPA region is a challenge primarily because our studio has a time constraint of just one semester. Additionally, the low level of regional planning in New York City and its environs has led to a fragmented existing regional trail system, as responsibility for development and maintenance is divided by state lines as well as the hundreds of local jurisdictional boundaries. This creates obstacles in the creation of new trailways as well in providing access to existing trails, greenways, and blueway networks.

To tackle these challenges, our studio began by learning as much as we could about our client and our region. We studied demographic trends across the region that would have an impact on and be impacted by access to regional trails, such as public health, economic development, and transportation networks.

We are now in the process of reviewing the various kinds of trail networks that exist within the region. With this base of knowledge we will form our recommendations for how best to achieve the RPA’s objective for a comprehensive regional trail network. Some options we’re considering include prioritizing gaps where trails don’t link up to public transit, unifying trails in the region through a branded, cohesive effort, and policy changes that promote commuting by bicycle in suburban areas.

Our studio strongly believes in the value that trails bring to urban, suburban, and rural residents. Trails are tools for boosting economic development, improving public health, and preserving the environment, among many other benefits. The members of our studio are excited to help promote the growth of trails in our region.
Covering over 160 acres, Sunnyside Yard is one of the largest undeveloped properties in New York City. Its immense size and central location in Long Island City in Western Queens combine to offer nearly limitless development potential. While the possibility of developing Sunnyside Yard is not a novel concept, discussion in the past year has swelled, inspiring calls from both pro- and anti-development camps. If decked, either partially or completely, Sunnyside Yard could offer possibilities for affordable housing, commercial office space, parks, or manufacturing uses.

The Studio client, the Long Island City Partnership, has been intently following the discussion. As a non-profit advocate for economic developments that benefit Long Island City’s industrial, commercial, cultural, and residential sectors, its members are keenly aware of both the opportunities and drawbacks that development of Sunnyside Yard might bring. In June 2014, the Long Island City Partnership convened its first Long Island City Summit, where Long Island City business leaders and politicians discussed opportunities that have emerged with the area’s recent growth, and how best to shape the dynamic neighborhood. The recommendations of our studio’s report will form the basis for further investigation by the Long Island City Partnership and its members, as well as other area stakeholders, on the role of Sunnyside Yard in Long Island City’s future.

The study sought to consider Sunnyside Yard within the context of a multi-faceted neighborhood, one that has experienced tremendous residential growth while struggling to stave off threats from real estate interests to its thriving manufacturing sector. The tension between accommodating housing in a city in dire need of affordable housing and preserving land for a manufacturing sector struggling to remain in the city will likely play out in the potential development of Sunnyside Yard. Our studio evaluated options for development while keeping these—and other—competing interests in mind.

The large site’s potential for multiple uses necessitated a planning framework that would establish common principles throughout various designs. Upon evaluation of the site itself (and its location, topography, and land use features) and of feedback from stakeholders on existing and future community needs, our studio established the following principles as central to our planning framework: Redevelopment Agency, Sustainability, Arts and Culture, Parks and Open Space, Zoning, Manufacturing, Affordable Housing, Transportation.

From this framework, the Studio developed three alternative designs for the site. Each of the alternatives, while prioritizing certain aspects of the planning framework principles over others and utilizing different urban design strategies, remained compatible with the overarching planning vision.

### PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. GRID DESIGN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Grid design connects surrounding neighborhoods both north-south and east-west</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Special zoning strategies promote the creation of new manufacturing space and joint live-work spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Includes Central Park and High Line-inspired green space</td>
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<th>2. SECTOR PLAN</th>
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<td>• “Tactical urbanism” events bring attention to existing neighborhoods’ planning needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Surrounding zoning is extended into the development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Winding park through the site increases open space and connectivity between neighborhoods</td>
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<th>3. LINEAR PARK</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Linear park network increases open green space and acts as a bikeway/pedestrian connector and an eco-service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transportation options improved to connect areas north and south of Sunnyside Yard to the wider region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand mixed-use, light manufacturing, and residential joint living spaces.</td>
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TILTED ARC


6. Ibid.


8. Senie, H. L.


13. Peter Hirsch, ibid.


15. William Rubin, ibid.

16. Frank Stella, ibid.


18. Senie.


HIGHLIFE


4. Ibid 2. P 21

5. Ibid 2. Ch. 2.


11. Ibid 1.


FOR HIRE


3. Rogoff, Theories, 89. A medallion is a permit that is required in order to legally pick up street hails in the five boroughs.


5. Rogoff, Theories, 162-163.


23. Two current Uber drivers/former yellow taxi drivers, in-person interview with the author, November 11, 2014.


26. Full disclosure: I was an employee in Hallio’s New York operation from 2012 to 2014.


32. Quoted in Rubinstein, “End of Taxi History.”
HIGHBRIDGE
2. The study area closely follows Census Tract 189, which had 98 percent minority residence according to 2010 US Census data.
4. See Appendix B1.
5. See Appendix B2.
10. Bishop, Artificial Hells, p.2
17. See Appendix B4 for a map showing the locations of potential sites.
19. Interview with Abu Talib at Taqwa Community Farm, conducted by Amina Hassen November 22, 2014.

NEW PARADIGMS, FAMILIAR COMPROMISES
2. Heathcott, 363.
4. Bristol, 166.
9. Ibid., 30.
10. Ibid., 40-41.
17. Heathcott, 360, 363.
18. Ibid., 368.
19. Ibid., 369.
20. Ibid., 370.
21. Erickson, 38.
22. Erickson, 43
24. Ibid., 152.