

**Contents**

2	Access to Capital: Promoting a More Equitable Future	6	Penn IUR Events
4	2023 Lawrence C. Nussdorf Student Award	9	Penn IUR Celebrates 50 Books in Series
4	Penn IUR Urban Doctoral Activities	10	Rooted in Research: Greening Cities for Health, Safety, and Well-Being
5	2023 Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Awardees	12	New Publications
		13	Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium

A Penn Institute For Urban Research Publication

# 2023 Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Awardees



Pictured left to right: Eugenie Birch, Mark Rosenberg, Manuel A. Alculeite Lopes de Araujo, Sheela Patel, Eleni Myrivili, Steve Adler, Susan Wachter, Melanie Nussdorf, and Alan D. Schnitzer.

**O**n April 21, 2023, Penn IUR celebrated the four recipients of the Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Prize in a public event at the Weitzman School of Design. The Prize recognizes leaders who are guiding cities toward a sustainable and equitable future and has been awarded to such urban luminaries as Henry Cisneros, Executive Chairman, CityView, and former Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Joan Clos Executive Director, United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT); Angela Glover Blackwell, President & CEO, PolicyLink (2016); and more than two dozen other leaders.

(CONTINUED ON P. 7)

# Penn IUR Celebrates 50 Books in Series

This March marked a notable milestone for Penn IUR: the publication of the 50th book in its series with Penn Press, *The City in the 21st Century*. Inaugurated in 2006, the collaboration has grown to become “the cornerstone of the Press’s urban studies list,” and the Press’s “highest profile venue for books on contemporary urban policy,” according to Robert Lockhart, Senior Editor, Penn Press

The 50 volumes cover a wide array of topics and cities, from informal politics in Accra to the role of immigration in revitalizing American cities to several edited volumes on urban issues of global importance, such as affordable housing, informality, downtown development, and climate adaptation. Among the books that have sold the most, are those in Penn IUR’s signature series by urban leaders such as Michael Nutter, former mayor of Philadelphia; Manny Diaz, former mayor of Miami; John Timoney, former chief of police in New Orleans, Miami, and Philadelphia, and others.

The series began nearly 20 years ago when Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and prompted a university-wide conversation with Penn experts about responding to Katrina and preventing future disasters. At the request of Penn’s Provost at the time, Ronald Daniels, Penn IUR Co-Directors, Eugenie L. Birch and Susan M. Wachter, convened a symposium on the topic and then published *Rebuilding*

(CONTINUED ON P. 11)

# Access to Capital: Promoting a More Equitable Future

On March 30, 2023, Penn IUR and Reinvestment Fund co-hosted the 5th Annual Jeremy Nowak Memorial Lecture online. The event, Access to Capital: Promoting a More Equitable Future, explored the financial structures that further inequity in cities and also proposed solutions to address them. Moderated by Wendell Pritchett, James S. Riepe Presidential Professor of Law and Education, University of Pennsylvania, the panel included George “Mac” McCarthy, President and CEO, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; Kerry Smith, Senior Staff Attorney, Community Legal Services; Jillian White, CEO & Founder, Appraisal Insights, and featured opening remarks by Donald Hinkle-Brown, President and CEO of the Reinvestment Fund and Eugenie L. Birch, Co-Director, Penn IUR.

The conversation began with an overview of the American mortgage appraisal system. Jillian White is a young, BIPOC female appraiser in an industry that is 97 percent white, 70 percent male, and 66 percent at or near retirement age. White realized how much identity mattered, both as an appraiser and

as a homeowner when she “whitewashed” her parents’ home to sell it. The experience illustrated how the appraisal industry was biased against people of color, thereby reducing the wealth that Black and brown communities build.

“Imagine for a moment your own home. Your home for most people is the largest wealth vehicle. And so think of the wealth being locked up in the home, and there needs to be a key to unlock it. That appraisal is the key,” White said. “There’s certain neighborhoods where, consistently the homeowners are able to get appraisals that unlock their wealth, and they have access to this capital which they can reinvest in their communities. But on the flip side there are communities that consistently are unable to access capital, and so the home owners do not have access to wealth, and are not able to reinvest in their communities in the same way. And so over the generations what will happen is the communities that have access to this unlocking of wealth tend to increase or appreciate over time, whereas the communities that don’t have access to this unlock tend to either stagnate or depreciate over time.”

But White notes that things are changing. By reducing the amount of discretion in the appraisal process, there is less room for bias. By diversifying the appraisal industry, communities that have been undervalued now have a chance to access more capital.

Next George McCarthy asked how to move beyond just identifying the flaws of our system to actually introducing successful remedies. “Who is in a position to shepherd that process of detecting the market failures and then getting to those remedies?... How do we get from systemic failure to systemic solutions?” McCarthy asked. He noted that simply offering communities capital after they have been long denied sufficient support isn’t enough. McCarthy noted Reinvestment Fund as a sustainable solution in that it provides not just capital, but solutions, data, and other resources that help communities thrive.

Kerry Smith addressed inequitable communities from the perspective of a lawyer who is pursuing a predatory scheme by the company, MV Realty, that preys on communities of color in Philadelphia and other cities in the United States.



Photo by Jan Jakub Nanista

“There are communities that consistently are unable to access capital, and so the home owners do not have access to wealth, and are not able to reinvest in their communities in the same way.”

Smith said it was important to not only increase access to capital, but also ensure that “predatory practices don’t erode any of the gains that we’ve made, and that that second component is so critical because financial predators are so creative at developing new schemes designed to extract the wealth and equity that people have worked so hard to build.”

Smith explained that MV Realty “was operating a predatory home-equity-stripping scheme, tricking homeowners into giving up thousands of dollars of their most valuable asset, their home. The company essentially promises homeowners, just a few hundred dollars of quick and easy cash, but then traps them into a mortgage through which they’ll be paying thousands for any transfer of their home over the next 40 years.” The scheme is operating in 33 states, and was flourishing here in Philadelphia, where the company recorded over 500 mortgages in the last two years, the vast majority of which are in Black and brown neighborhoods.

McCarthy added that not only are predatory schemes a problem, but so are institution-

al buyers. An estimated 15 to 20 percent of single-family home transactions are executed by institutional investors buying owner-occupied housing and converting those homes to rental housing.

“The reason they’re doing is because rental markets have gotten so tight that rents are going up... and then what they’re trying to do is find ways to to extract rent and raise the asset value of the neighborhood, but for the investors, not for the residents.”

McCarthy called on the public sector to start to acquire or require the city get “first refusal” on properties to make sure they don’t slip into institutional investors’ hands. He gave the example of Cincinnati’s redevelopment authority which has purchased properties from investors, fixed them up, and resold them to moderate income families.

Smith added that the most affordable home for many people is the one they are in. She cited the Whole-Home Repairs program in Pennsylvania as an example of a way to help homeowners improve their homes, build wealth, and contribute to that goal of more equitable communities.

## 2023 Lawrence C. Nussdorf Student Award

Penn IUR recognized three students with the 2023 Penn IUR Lawrence C. Nussdorf Student Award. The award, named in honor of the late Lawrence C. Nussdorf, an early champion of Penn IUR and a founding Board member, recognizes exemplary students who have demonstrated their deep interest in urban issues through involvement in the Fellows in Urban Leadership (FUL) program or the Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium (UURC).



This year's winners included **Luke Campo** (C'24), a Penn IUR Fellow in Urban Leadership 2022-23 and student in the Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium, who is majoring in International Relations and minoring in Environmental Studies.



**Adam Goudjil** (C'23) a Penn IUR Fellow in Urban Leadership 2021-23 and a student in the Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium majored in Urban Studies and minored in Urban Education Policy.



**Victoria "Tori" Sousa** (C'23) a Penn IUR Fellow in Urban Leadership 2022-23 and student in the Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium majored in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics, with a concentration in Public Policy and Governance.

## Penn IUR Urban Doctoral Activities

The Urban Doctoral Symposium, co-sponsored with the Penn Urban Studies Program, gives graduating doctoral students who have completed dissertations on urban-focused topics an opportunity to present their findings, make connections with other urban scholars across disciplines, and publish synopses of their research in a special annual issue of Penn IUR's Urban Link, *New Ideas in Urban Research*. The following students presented their work at the Symposium:

**David Mitre Becerril**  
*The Effects of Neighborhood Investments on Public Safety*

Criminology, School of Arts & Sciences

**Advisor:** Aaron J. Chalfin, Associate Professor of Criminology

**Christine Quattro**  
*Evidence of Disparate Impact in Existing Zoning Structures*

City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

**Advisor:** Thomas Daniels, Crossways Professor

**Xuequan Elsie Peng**  
*The Dynamics of Urban Development: Evidence from Land Use Reform in New York*

Economics, School of Arts & Sciences

**Advisors:** Gilles Duranton, Professor of Real Estate, Wharton Real Estate Department, and Holger Sieg, Professor of Economics, Department of Economics

**Boqian Xu**  
*Transforming China's National New Areas towards Ecological Civilization*

City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

**Advisor:** Zhongjie Lin, Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning

## 2023 Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Awardees (continued from page 1)



Sheela Patel



Steve Adler



Manuel A. Alculete Lopes de Araújo



Eleni "Lenio" Myrivili

This year's awardees' work centered on addressing climate change and equity in cities across the globe. At the event, Steve Adler, the mayor of Austin, Texas, 2013-2023, recalled his work to institute major initiatives in housing, transportation, race relations, public health, and climate change mitigation. He led mobility improvements that encompass a multi-modal system of light rail, bike trails, improved sidewalks, and EV charging stations. During his term, Austin passed the largest housing bonds in its history and reduced homelessness. And his Climate Equity Plan targeted 2040 for the city to be net zero.

In a different urban context, Manuel A. Alculete Lopes de Araújo, Mayor of Quelimane, Mozambique, 2011 to present, has overseen the dramatic growth of his city to 450,000 people, making Quelimane the fourth most populous city in the country. Among his many notable projects are anti-corruption reforms, transport, and resilience. He has made Quelimane the bike capital of Mozambique, restored such key cultural landmarks as the city's cathedral and public theater, and promoted mangrove restoration along the city's coastline while addressing seaside informal settlement incursion. During his speech at the event, he noted the city's ongoing recovery from Cyclone Freddy in February 2023, which claimed more than 1,000 lives worldwide.

As Global Chief Heat Officer, UN-Habitat and the Adrienne Arsht-

Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center, Eleni "Lenio" Myrivili spoke about the importance of cultivating heat resilience in cities around the world, by raising awareness of extreme heat risks and solutions, such as naming heat waves. Elected Deputy Mayor for the City of Athens, and in former roles as Athens' Chief Resilience Officer and Athens' Chief Heat Officer, she pioneered multi million-euro programs in equitable blue and green infrastructure development to protect the city's most vulnerable populations.

Finally, Sheela Patel, Founder Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), a Mumbai-based NGO that has been working on housing and infrastructure rights for the urban poor since 1984, discussed her work over the last four decades. Throughout her career, she has partnered with vulnerable communities living in informal settlements, both in India as part of SPARC and globally through Slum/Shack Dwellers International. Recently, she has been working on the challenges of climate change and how they impact cities' most vulnerable people, seeking to highlight their role as first responders to natural disasters and the urgent need to include urban, rural, indigenous, and other networks in a just transition to a more sustainable world.



Listen to the  
**Special Briefing**  
podcast

Hear government officials, experts, and investors discuss state and local finance.

## Throughout the year Penn IUR hosts an array of events in the form of Public Programs, Special Briefings, Expert Roundtables, and the Forum on Urban Informality.



Eleni Myrivili addresses the audience at the 2023 Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Award ceremony.

### SPECIAL BRIEFINGS

With the Volcker Alliance, Penn IUR hosts monthly panel discussions and a podcast where local and state officials and experts discuss critical topics for American cities.

January 19, 2023  
**THE FUTURE OF DOWNTOWNS**

Pandemic-driven remote work has led to a drop in U.S. office building value, putting pressure on cities that rely on commercial property taxes to rethink everything from tax and land use policy to mass transit.

**SPEAKERS:** Steven J. Davis, *University of Chicago*; Tracy Hadden Loh, *The Brookings Institution*; Stijn Van Nieuwerburgh, *Columbia University*; and Romy Varghese, *Bloomberg News*.

February 16, 2023  
**STATE AND LOCAL BUDGETS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES**

State and local budget officers are facing a raft of

risks and uncertainties for fiscal 2024 and beyond from a position of unprecedented strength.

**SPEAKERS:** Shelby Kerns, *National Association for State Budget Officers (NASBO)*; Eric Kim, *Fitch Ratings*; Gabriel Petek, *State of California*; and Lauren Larson, *State of Colorado*.

March 30, 2023  
**REVITALIZING DOWNTOWNS BY TURNING OFFICES INTO HOMES**

Conversions of office buildings into homes are key to reviving urban downtowns and protecting municipal tax bases after pandemic-related work-from-home arrangements slashed demand for downtown commercial property.

**SPEAKERS:** Amy Cotter, *Lincoln Institute of Land Policy*; Heather Long, *The Washington Post*; Stijn Van Nieuwerburgh, *Columbia University*; and Maria Torres-Springer, *City of New York*.

April 27, 2023  
**AMERICA'S HOTTEST STATES AND CITIES: MANAGING GROWTH**

The fastest growing U.S. cities, counties, and

states are benefiting and facing challenges from rapidly expanding populations.

**SPEAKERS:** Alex Adams, *State of Idaho*; Steve Adler, *City of Austin, Texas*; Matthew D. Chase, *National Association of Counties*; Darryl Martin, *Dallas County, Texas*; and Anna Roach, *Atlanta Regional Commission*.

May 18, 2023  
**AVOIDING MUNICIPAL DISTRESS**

Pension funding, rising interest rates, and shrinking commercial property tax bases are among the challenges U.S. cities face as the \$5 trillion surge in federal pandemic relief money recedes.

**SPEAKERS:** Rob Dubow, *City of Philadelphia*; Heather Gillers, *The Wall Street Journal*; Stephanie Miner, *City of Syracuse, N.Y.*; and David Schleicher, *Yale Law School*.

June 15, 2023  
**THE DEBT CEILING DEAL AND ITS IMPACT ON THE U.S. ECONOMY, STATES, AND MUNICIPALITIES**

Though the debt limit deal spared the municipi-

pal market from onerous cuts in federal fiscal support, state and local governments still face a risk of reduced federal spending while they also contend with inflation, high interest rates, reduced demand for their bonds, and a looming crisis in the health care sector.

**SPEAKERS:** Matt Fabian, *Municipal Market Analytics*; Marcia Howard, *Federal Funds Information for States*; Annie Linskey, *The Wall Street Journal*; Vikram Rai, *Citigroup*; and Torsten Slok, *Apollo Global Management*.

### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Penn IUR hosts public programs both on campus and online to engage students, scholars, and urban leaders.

January 20, 2023  
**WHARTON FUTURE OF CITIES CONFERENCE**

Penn IUR co-sponsored this event, which explored how COVID galvanized urban innovation that has enabled our cities to be more connected than ever before. Panels explored the strategies around and the impact of heightened connectivity in our cities.

January 20, 2023  
**ROOTED IN RESEARCH: GREENING CITIES FOR HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING**

See event recap on page 10.

**SPEAKERS:** Penn IUR Co-Director, Susan Wachter; Matt Rader, *President, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society*; John MacDonald, *Professor of Criminology and Sociology, School of Arts & Sciences*; Shane Jenson, *Professor of Statistics and Data Science, The Wharton School*; and Michelle Kondo, *Research Social Scientist, USDA-Forest Service*

**CO-SPONSOR:** Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

February 9, 2023  
**PENN IUR BOOK TALK: CHINA URBANIZING**

A book talk and discussion with the editors and chapter authors of *China Urbanizing: Impacts and Transitions*, published by Penn Press as part of Penn IUR's ongoing series *The City in the Twenty-First Century*.

**SPEAKERS:** Cindy Fan, *Vice Provost, International Studies and Global Engagement, UCLA*; Qin Gao, *Professor of Social Policy and Social Work and Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, Columbia University*; Piper Gaubatz, *Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst*; Scott Moore, *Director of China Programs and Strategic Initiatives, PennGlobal, University of Pennsylvania*; Alan Smart, *Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Calgary*; Weiping Wu, *Professor, Department of Urban Planning, and Director, Urban Planning Program, Columbia University*

February 14, 2023  
**DECARBONIZING CITIES WITH SMART CITY TECHNOLOGIES IN KOREA**

The lecture explored ongoing projects conducted by Dr. Han at the Planning Lab for Sustainability and Climate Change and the Smart City Research Center at KAIST.

**SPEAKER:** Dr. Albert Tonghoon Han, *Assistant Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST)*

February 15, 2023  
**PENN IUR BOOK TALK: MEGAPROJECTS FOR MEGACITIES**

Penn IUR Faculty Fellow John Landis discussed Megaprojects for Megacities, a collection of 14 international case studies of transportation, urban development, and environmental megaprojects completed during the last ten years in North America, Asia and Europe.

**SPEAKER:** John Landis, *Professor Emeritus, Department of City and Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania*

February 28, 2023  
**PENN IUR BOOK TALK: NATION'S METROPOLIS**

The authors of *Nation's Metropolis*, published by Penn Press as part of Penn IUR's ongoing series *The City in the Twenty-First Century*, discussed their book.

**SPEAKERS:** Royce Hanson, *Professor, George Washington Institute of Public Policy*; Hal Wolman, *Emeritus Professor, Department of Political Science, George Washington University*

March 21, 2023  
**DECARBONIZATION AND URBAN INSTITUTIONS**

As part of Energy Week at Penn, Penn IUR co-sponsored this event focused on the role of higher education institutions in Boston (MIT), New York City (Columbia), and Philadelphia (Penn) and how these institutions are advancing decarbonization efforts in the context of their communities.

**SPEAKERS:** Nina Morris, *Sustainability Director, Penn Sustainability*; Julie Newman, *Lecturer, Environmental Planning and Sustainability, MIT*; Jessica Prata, *Assistant Vice President, Environmental Stewardship, Columbia University*; Moderator, Saleem Chapman, *Chief Resilience Officer, City of Philadelphia*

**CO-SPONSORS:** Kleinman Center for Energy Policy, Penn Sustainability, Penn Environmental Innovations Institute

March 30, 2023  
**JEREMY NOWAK MEMORIAL LECTURE: ACCESS TO CAPITAL: PROMOTING A MORE EQUITABLE FUTURE**

See event recap on page 2.

**SPEAKERS:** George "Mac" McCarthy, *President and CEO, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy*; Kerry Smith, *Senior Staff Attorney, Community Legal Services*; Jillian White, *CEO & Founder, Appraisal Insights*; Moderator, Wendell Pritchett, *James S. Riepe Presidential Professor of Law and Education, University of Pennsylvania*

**CO-SPONSOR:** Reinvestment Fund

April 12, 2023  
**RENEWING CHINESE CITIES**

As China's urban areas have continued to grow and transform, this series of presentations by Penn IUR visiting scholars from China discussed the role that urban research in planning and design can play in renewing Chinese cities.

**SPEAKERS:** Tingting Hong, *Department Chair of Landscape Architecture, Fuzhou University*; Rong Zhao, *Associate Professor of Urban Design, China Academy of Art*; Shaoping Guan, *Professor of Design and Architecture, South China University of Technology*; and Ruoxi Zhang, *Associate Dean of School of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Xiamen University*; Moderator, Zhongjie Lin, *Associate Professor*

## EVENTS

of City & Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania; Penn IUR Faculty Fellow

April 13, 2023

### FINDING CONTEXT WITHOUT A MAP: CAROLYN FISH ON CONTEXTUAL CARTOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Carolyn Fish explored the larger shifts in the cartographic discipline from contextless controlled experimental studies to the more contextual research now common in the discipline.

**SPEAKER:** Carolyn Fish, Assistant Professor of Geography, University of Oregon

**CO-SPONSOR:** Master of Urban Spatial Analytics

April 21, 2023

### 18TH ANNUAL URBAN LEADERSHIP FORUM

See event recap on page TK.

**SPEAKERS:** Steve Adler, Former Mayor, City of Austin, Texas; Manuel A. Alculete Lopes de Araújo, Mayor, Municipality of Quelimane, Mozambique; Eleni "Lenio" Myrivili, Global Chief Heat Officer, UN-Habitat and Adrienne Arsh-t-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center; Sheela Patel, Founder Director, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres

### EXPERT ROUNDTABLES

Penn IUR convenes public, private and civic sector experts for small group discussions on topics critical to the future of cities.

March 16, 2023

### PENN IUR ROUNDTABLE ON ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS: UNIVERSITIES AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The roundtable convened speakers from University of Pennsylvania and six peer institutions to discuss the challenge of affordable housing and the tools universities can use to address it.

**FEATURED SPEAKERS:** Rana H. Altenburg, Associate Vice President for Public Affairs, Office of University Relations, Marquette University; Eugénie Birch, Co-Director, Penn IUR; Craig Carnaroli, Senior Executive Vice President, University of Pennsylvania; Lina Dostilio, EdD, Vice Chancellor, Engagement and Community Affairs, University of Pittsburgh; Lance Freeman, Penn Integrates Knowledge University Professor

of City and Regional Planning and Sociology, University of Pennsylvania; David Galaviz, Associate Vice President for Government and Community Relations, University of Southern California; Purnima Kapur, Chief of University Planning and Design, Harvard University; Bobbie Laur, President, Campus Compact; Alice J. Raucher, Architect for the University, University of Virginia; Susan Wachter, Co-Director, Penn IUR; Stefanie Williams, Vice President for Durham & Community Affairs (DCA), Duke University

May 24, 2023

### RESPONDING TO STATE AND LOCAL BUDGET CRISES

Leading academic and private sector experts convened to discuss new ideas in managing state and local budget crises.

**FEATURED SPEAKERS:** Leah Brooks, Associate Professor, George Washington University; Vincent Buccola, Associate Professor of Legal Studies & Business Ethics, University of Pennsylvania; Matt Fabian, Partner, Municipal Market Analytics; Clayton P. Gillette, Max E. Greenberg Professor of Contract Law at NYU School of Law; Bill Glasgall, Senior Director, Public Finance, The Volcker Alliance; Tracy Gordon, Vice President of Tax Policy, Urban Institute; Dirk Krueger, Walter H. and Leonore C. Annenberg Professor in the Social Sciences, University of Pennsylvania; David Schleicher, Professor of Law, Yale University

**CO-SPONSOR:** Wharton Initiative on Financial Policy Regulation

June 29, 2023

### THE CHALLENGE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING: SHARED EQUITY AS A WAY FORWARD

The roundtable explored the models for shared equity, such as community land trusts, and the opportunities for and barriers to scaling them.

**FEATURED SPEAKERS:** Paul Bradley, President, ROC USA; Jim Gray, Senior Fellow, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; Jeff Lubell, Principal Associate and Director of Housing and Community Initiatives, Social & Economic Policy, Abt Associates; George McCarthy, President and CEO, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; Emily Thaden, Vice President of National Strategy, Grounded Solutions Network; Susan Wachter, Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research

**CO-SPONSOR:** Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

### FORUM ON URBAN INFORMALITY

Nem quis replate doluptas aut delique odiscit, quis arit lictatem aut undebs sunt, iducia dolorio remqui dolorro elitatu ritatun tius, vellende

March 23, 2023

### PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE ELECTRICITY TO URBAN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The seminar explored the challenge of providing basic services to informal urban settlements, which have historically lacked access to electricity. The seminar examined how sustainability and steady electricity provision can be integrated into service provision in these settlements.

**SPEAKERS:** James Kwame Mensah, Senior Lecturer, Department of Public Administration and Health Services Management, University of Ghana Business School Vincent Kitio, Architect, Chief, Urban Energy Unit, UN-Habitat Eugénie Birch, Co-Director, Penn IUR

April 19, 2023

### PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE HEAT SOLUTIONS TO URBAN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

The speakers in this panel approached the problem from different perspectives – sociology, engineering, and public administration – to better understand how we can ensure viable, scalable, and sustainable solutions to urban heat island effects in informal settlements of the Global South.

May 16, 2023

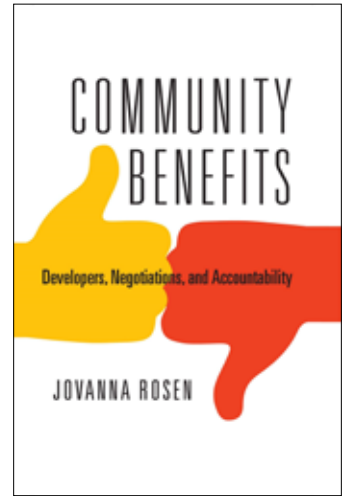
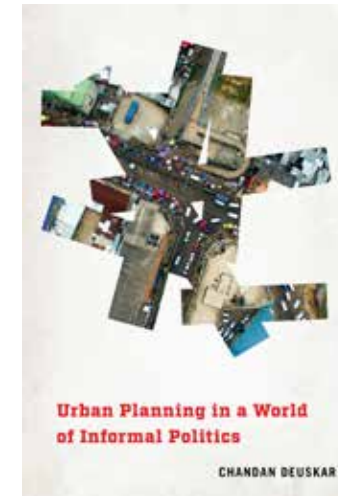
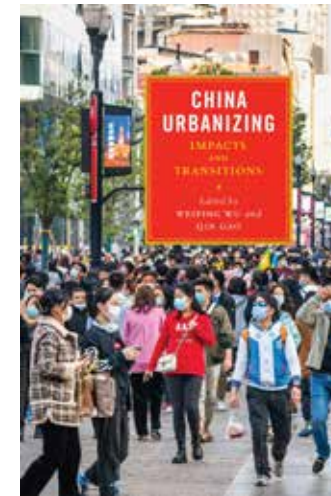
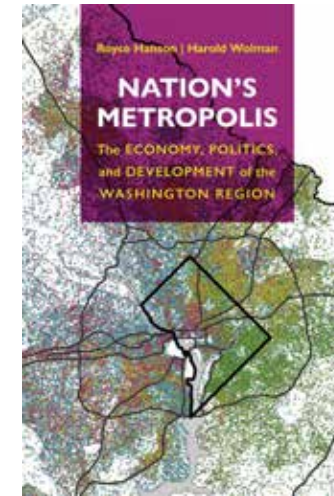
### THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF DEMOCRACY AT THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

As part of the Forum on Urban Informality's "Conversations on Informality" series, the discussion explored how legal exception at the United States-Mexico border impact transborder commuters, asylum seekers, and advocates alike.

**SPEAKERS:** Dr. Estefanía Castañeda Pérez, Postdoctoral Fellow, Penn Migration Initiative; Erika Pinheiro, Executive Director of AI Otro Lado; Stephanie Rivera-Kumar, Doctoral Student, City & Regional Planning

## FEATURE

## Penn IUR Celebrates 50 Books in Series (continued from page 1)



Urban Places After Disaster: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina to gather insights and research by more than two dozen contributors.

"The City in the 21st Century Series," says Beth A. Winkelstein, Interim Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, "exemplifies our core university mission: bringing together innovative research, across a wide range of interdisciplinary areas, to make a tangible impact on global challenges. We are very proud that, for more than fifteen years, the series has been shaping urban policy and planning around the world."

While the series has included several edited volumes that emerged from Penn IUR conferences, including Growing Greener Cities, Global Urbanization, and Women's Health and the World's Cities, it has since grown into a curated list of books that chronicle urban policy and practice in the 21st century. Penn IUR's longstanding focus on topics such as housing and urban finance resulted in edited volumes such as Public Pensions and City Solvency and Perspectives on Fair Housing, engaging Penn IUR's faculty fellows and network of affiliated scholars.

"There is a mutually beneficial relationship between the book series and Penn IUR's programming and research. One naturally informs the other, ensuring that key topics are addressed both with the timeliness of convenings and the longevity that books provide," says Wachter.

The series' concrete policy-oriented approach is one of the factors that makes it stand out, Lockhart says, adding that Birch and Wachter are also able to identify cutting edge topics and scholars, "because they're experts in the field and they have extensive networks."

"We have had the pleasure of seeing the series grow under the guidance of Penn Press editors and the editorial board who have supported our suggestions for publishing work by a range of authors across disciplines, from the freshly minted PhD to senior scholars to distinguished practitioners, all contributing new knowledge to our field," says Birch.

In more recent years, the series has added more international authors and topics. China Urbanizing, Shareholder Cities: Land Transformations Along Urban Corridors in India, Urban Planning in a World of Informal Politics, and the forthcoming Master Plans and Encroachments: The

"Penn Press couldn't be prouder to publish the C21 series. Penn IUR is a global leader in understanding the complex, evolving dynamics of cities."

Architecture of Informality in Islamabad give readers a perspective on urban challenges in Asia and Africa.

"Penn Press couldn't be prouder to publish the C21 series. Penn IUR is a global leader in understanding the complex, evolving dynamics of cities, and by publishing the scholarly results of Penn IUR research, Penn Press brings Penn IUR's signature intellectual vitality to readers around the world," says Mary Francis, Director, Penn Press.

The series has resulted in more than \$1 million in revenue for Penn Press, which is especially meaningful in a time when book publishing faces new challenges in reaching audiences. Lockhart says that not only are the ever-changing algorithms and audiences of social media platforms a challenge, but so too was the pandemic, which made it hard to host in-person book events that drive sales. That said, hybrid book events like the ones that Penn IUR regularly hosts for new releases in the book series, have expanded the audience for book launches. "We learned through the pandemic to implement new technologies and increase readership," says Lockhart.



Cleaning and greening vacant lots can not only improve the look of neighborhoods, but have positive impacts on health and safety.

# Rooted in Research: Greening Cities for Health, Safety, and Well-Being

**R**ooted in Research: Could cleaning and greening vacant lots not only improve the look of neighborhoods, but have positive impacts on health, safety, and well-being? University of Pennsylvania researchers have been addressing this question, and they shared their most recent findings at a January 2023 online event co-hosted by Penn IUR, Analytics at Wharton, and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS).

With an introduction by Vice Dean of Analytics at Wharton, Eric Bradlow, and moderated by Penn IUR Co-Director, Susan Wachter, the conversation centered on the social and economic value of greening vacant lots. A panel of Penn researchers presented their work, including

John MacDonald, professor of criminology and sociology, School of Arts and Sciences; Shane Jensen, professor of statistics and data science, Wharton; and Michelle Kondo, research social scientist with the USDA-Forest Service who completed her postdoctoral training in environmental health and epidemiology at Penn.

PHS's President Matt Rader opened the program with an overview of PHS's LandCare program, which greens and cleans 13,000 vacant lots throughout Philadelphia, turning eyesores into community assets. PHS uses horticulture to positively impact healthy outcomes via social determinants of health, such as healthy food access, economic opportunity, livable environments, and social connections. Rader said

he believes that a well-gardened public realm is not a nice-to-have amenity but a "must-have element of a healthy neighborhood." Greening can also "affordably and equitably advance health and well-being."

While new research bolsters the connection between greening, safety, well-being, and economic vitality, the collaboration of Penn researchers with PHS is longstanding. In 2006, Penn IUR and PHS co-hosted a conference, *Growing Greener Cities*, which resulted in a book of the same name, edited by Penn IUR's co-directors, Susan Wachter and Eugenie Birch. In one of the chapters, "Green Investment Strategies and Urban Neighborhoods," Wachter, Kevin C. Gillen, and Carolyn R. Brown showed that commercial greening, vacant lot management, and neighborhood greening all conferred additional value to homes and the desirability of neighborhoods, especially when deployed by business improvement districts. While the conference explored green interventions in cities around the world, the connection between Penn IUR and PHS would continue as both organizations share a home base in Philadelphia.

Penn IUR faculty fellows have been at the forefront of showing how green infrastructure can contribute to a city, often using PHS's data about greening initiatives around Philadelphia. For example, in their 2018 paper, "Effect of Greening Vacant Land on Mental Health of Community-Dwelling Adults," researchers Eugenia South, Bernadette Hol, Michelle Kondo, John MacDonald, and Charles Branas showed that residents living with a quarter mile of revitalized lots had a 41.5 percent decrease in feelings of depression compared to those who lived near lots that had not been cleaned.

At January's Rooted in Research event, John MacDonald noted that "the idea that there are benefits to vacant lot remediation is consistent with theories in criminology," such as the "broken windows" theory that a lack of neighborhood maintenance can encourage criminal activity. MacDonald showed that in Philadelphia, the greening of 12,788 vacant lots between 2006-2018 resulted in a 5.59 percent overall drop in crime, with a 20 percent drop in robbery. MacDonald noted that in Philadelphia, 3 percent of streets contribute to 50 percent of shootings; in these locations, greening and cleaning vacant lots could have a major impact on violence in the city.

Michelle Kondo shared a meta-analysis of eight studies of vacant lot remediation. She explained that there is nuance to the kind of greening that is effective. For example, one study showed that mowing vacant lots did not significantly reduce firearm violence, but greening and gardening did by more than 5 percent. Kondo also shared her research co-authored with Eugenia South, Charles



Pennsylvania Horticultural Society cleans and greens vacant land throughout Philadelphia.

Penn IUR faculty fellows have been at the forefront of showing how green infrastructure can contribute to a city, often using PHS's data about greening initiatives around Philadelphia.

Wiebe, which showed that tree cover could provide protection against gun violence, as tree cover was inversely associated with gunshot assault.

Finally, Shane Jensen presented research that he and Susan Wachter conducted using property sale data and sophisticated housing models, showing that PHS's LandCare program can provide a benefit of \$200,000 in real estate value to properties neighboring

several thousand dollar estimated cost. In a forthcoming paper to be published in *Real Estate Economics*, the team compares 4,651 lots that had been greened from 2007-2017 against a control group of 16,799 untreated lots from that same period. On average, properties within a 1,000-foot radius of a greened lot experience a 4.3 percent increase in value after the first year and a 13 percent cumulative increase after six years. Compared with the relatively small cost of greening, the LandCare treatment provides a substantial return on investment.

As the panelists took questions from the audience, Wachter asked about concerns that greening vacant lots can lead to gentrification. Jensen acknowledged that while the benefit of increased property values is focused on homeowners, the entire community reaps the safety and mental health benefits of an improved physical realm. MacDonald added that there wasn't any evidence of greening causing gentrification in his studies. By contrast, the demographics of the neighborhood do not seem to change after the greening is done.

When asked why research matters, Rader said that there are still thousands of vacant lots that have yet to be greened. "Research helps us tell the story to residents and policymakers and other civic leaders," he said, and helps reinforce the need to improve those unintended vacant lots.

# New Publications

Throughout the year, Penn IUR publishes policy briefs, case studies, reports and other forms of research that contribute to the field of urban research. In Spring 2023, the following publications covered topics ranging from housing, to nature-based solutions, to the impacts of COVID-19, and urban resilience.



## ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS: UNIVERSITIES AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Universities as urban anchors are addressing issues of sustainability and equity that extend beyond their physical plants. Following

a Penn Roundtable on Anchor Institutions, case studies on Duke University, Harvard University, Marquette University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, University of Southern California, and University of Virginia explored their different approaches including subsidizing off-campus affordable housing, partnering in joint ventures, and engaging community partners to increase affordable housing.



## AN OVERVIEW OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE UNITED STATES

The policy brief, "An Overview of Affordable Housing in the United States," is part of an ongoing Penn IUR research

initiative on affordable housing. Authored by Penn IUR Faculty Fellow Lance Freeman, the brief describes the causes of and evaluates potential solutions to the national affordable housing crisis. Freeman points out that much of the affordable housing stock is naturally occurring rather than supported by federally subsidized housing. Nonetheless, these market-provided units are rapidly declining, and federally subsidized units are also exiting from the stock in areas of need, where housing prices are fast appreciating.



## DEFINING AND ASSESSING URBAN NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Penn IUR, in collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), developed a definition

of urban nature-based solutions (uNbS) and began a preliminary assessment of worldwide expenditures on them. This work

contributes to UNEP's ongoing reports on the state of finance in nature that views NbS as the restoration and management of natural and human ecosystems. The importance of highlighting uNbS adds a new dimension to the field. Traditional studies measure land use – forests and agriculture – but neglect NbS in cities despite their important roles in mitigation and adaptation. Penn IUR's *State of Finance for Nature in Cities: Summary for Local Policymakers* remedies this gap by assembling a preliminary database and illustrative case studies from around the world to fashion awareness among local governments, financial stakeholders, and private sector and knowledge partners to recognize and scale up uNbS investments. A more detailed study accompanies the UNEP publication, *Assessing Nature-based Solution Investments for Urban Resilience Research Supplement to State of Nature for Cities: Time to Assess*.

## #GALAPAGOSGOESGREEN PART 2

*Exploring How the Galápagos Islands Can Promote Sustainability and Build Resilience in Response to Rising Tourism* investigates how the islands can reduce their dependence on fossil fuels, in particular their heavy reliance on imported goods and fuel, while maintaining a strong ecologically sensitive tourist-based economy. The findings cover aviation, shipping, land transport, and energy. The research built on #GalapagosGoesGreen: Galapagos Green Mobility Strategy published last year.

## WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO MAKE GALAPAGOS TOURIST RESILIENT?

Simon Richter, Professor of German, and Josh Mosley, Professor of Fine Arts, along with a student team (Connie Pan, Ejun Hong, Elon Vedomey, and Gabriel Gonsalves Bertho) used the findings of *Exploring How the Galapagos Islands Can Promote Sustainability* to create an animated video, *What Would it Take to Make Galapagos Tourist Resilient*, to be

employed in raising public awareness about the topic.

## CAN SOUTH KOREA EMPLOY COVERED BONDS FOR RENTAL HOUSING FOR NEW HOUSEHOLDS?

Penn IUR, in collaboration with the Wilson Center, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and American University, responded to the following question posed by the Korea Housing and Urban Guarantee Corporation (HUG): What interventions would enable young South Korean households to secure rental housing? Penn IUR's response, *Can South Korea Employ Covered Bonds for Rental Housing for New Households?* evaluated covered bonds, a financial instrument widely employed in Europe, for their potential use for rental housing in South Korea.



## TEN WAYS COVID-19 CHANGED AMERICA – OR MAYBE NOT

As with every other aspect of American life, COVID-19 upended how we plan and manage cities. With the national

media concentrating on the post-pandemic difficulties still facing cities like New York and San Francisco, the bigger story – that the pace of recovery has varied widely among U.S. cities and metropolitan areas – has largely gone unreported. For every Los Angeles or Chicago still struggling to recover, there is a Phoenix or Austin doing just fine. Written three years after Covid-19 arrived in the U.S., this working paper by John Landis, Penn IUR Faculty Fellow, and Crossways Professor Emeritus, Department of City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design, expands on this theme of difference between places and pandemic recovery trajectories.



UURC Participants

# Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium

Penn IUR has sponsored CPLN 528/URBS 428 Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium (UURC) for 19 years as an advanced research seminar for undergraduates to work with faculty or doctoral candidate mentors on an urban focused project requiring basic research. The teams come from departments throughout the university, with students receiving credits either through the Weitzman School of Design's Department of City and Regional Planning or the School of Arts and Sciences' Urban Studies Program. In 2022-23 the cohort included the following students and projects:

## Analyzing the Interactive Effect of Race and Neighborhood Attributes in Predicting Traffic Stop Outcomes Using Artificial Intelligence

**STUDENT:** Amy Zhang, Economics, The Wharton School  
**MENTOR:** Shengxiao (Alex) Li, Ph.D. '22, Postdoctoral Researcher, School of Public Policy, University of California

## Asian American Participation in Climate Adaptation Planning; A Case Study of New York City's Heat Adaptation Strategies

**STUDENT:** Khue Tran, Earth Science and Environmental Studies  
**MENTOR:** Chaeri Kim 'Ph.D. 22, Postdoctoral Researcher, Simon Fraser University

## Changing Legislative Racial Landscape in Wisconsin: Measuring Shifts in Legislative Attention to Race

**STUDENT:** Shevell Higgs, Political Science, College of Arts and Sciences  
**MENTOR:** Amber Mackey, Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science, School of Arts and Sciences

## Exploring How the Galápagos Islands Can Promote Sustainability and Build Resilience in Response to Rising Tourism

**STUDENT:** Luke Campo, International Relations & Environmental Studies, College of Arts and Sciences  
**MENTOR:** Eugénie Birch, Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research, Weitzman School of Design

## Mutual Aid in New York City: Student-led Aid and Efforts

**STUDENT:** Yeeun Yoo, Urban Studies, College of Arts and Sciences  
**MENTOR:** Mary Rocco, Ph.D. '16, Penn IUR Scholar, Director of Engaged Scholarship, Community Engagement and Inclusion, Barnard College

## Racial Policy and Agenda Instability: Measuring Shifts in Legislative Attention to Race in Michigan's State Legislature

**STUDENT:** Victoria Sousa, Philosophy, Politics, and Economics  
**MENTOR:** Amber Mackey, Ph.D. Candidate, Political Science, School of Arts and Sciences

## Walkability in Northeast Philadelphia: Investigating how Walkability Influences Transportation Habits of Residents

**STUDENT:** Talyah Pierce, College of Arts and Sciences  
**MENTOR:** Jay Arzu, Ph.D. Candidate, City and Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

# About Penn IUR

**The Penn Institute for Urban Research** is dedicated to advancing cross-disciplinary urban-focused research, instruction, and civic engagement on issues relevant to cities around the world. As the global population becomes increasingly urban, understanding cities is vital to informed decision-making and public policy at the local, national, and international levels. Penn IUR has a strong focus on research that informs the sustainable and inclusive 21st-century city. By providing a forum for collaborative scholarship and instruction at Penn and beyond, Penn IUR stimulates research and engages with urban practitioners and policymakers to inform urban policy.

## *Penn IUR Directors & Staff*

**EUGÉNIE L. BIRCH**  
Co-Director; Lawrence C. Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research and Education, Department of City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

**SUSAN M. WACHTER**  
Co-Director; Sussman Professor and Professor of Real Estate and Finance, The Wharton School

**AMY MONTGOMERY**  
Managing Director

**SAMUEL GELDIN**  
PhD 2022

**ARDEN JORDAN**  
Program Coordinator

**DIANA LIND**  
Communications and Publications Director

**AMANDA LLOYD**  
Program Director, Global Research Initiatives

## *Contact Information*

G-12 Meyerson Hall  
210 South 34th Street  
University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6311  
P 215.573.8386  
F 215.898.5731

[penniur@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:penniur@pobox.upenn.edu)  
[penniur.upenn.edu](http://penniur.upenn.edu)  
[facebook.com/penniur.upenn](https://facebook.com/penniur.upenn)  
[instagram.com/penn\\_iur/](https://instagram.com/penn_iur/)  
[linkedin.com/company/penniuir](https://linkedin.com/company/penniuir)  
[twitter.com/penniuir](https://twitter.com/penniuir)

## *Penn IUR Executive Committee*

### CO-CHAIR:

**BETH A. WINKELSTEIN**  
Interim Provost, University of Pennsylvania

### CO-CHAIR:

**DAWN BONNELL**  
Vice Provost for Research, Henry Robinson Towne Professor of Engineering and Applied Science, School of Engineering and Applied Science

### WILLIAM BURKE-WHITE

Richard Perry Professor, Professor of Law, School of Law; Inaugural Director, Perry World House

### JEFFREY COOPER

Vice President, Office of Government and Community Affairs

### DENNIS CULHANE

Professor and Dana and Andrew Stone Chair in Social Policy; Co-Principal Investigator, Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy, School of Social Policy and Practice

### JOHN DILULIO

Frederick Fox Leadership Professor of Politics, Religion, and Civil Society, School of Arts and Sciences

### GILLES DURANTON

Dean's Chair in Real Estate Professor; Chair, Department of Real Estate, The Wharton School

### STEVEN FLUHARTY

Dean and Thomas S. Gates, Jr. Professor of Psychology, Pharmacology, and Neuroscience, School of Arts and Sciences

### MICHAEL GIBBONS

I.W. Burnham II Professor of Investment Banking; Deputy Dean, The Wharton School

### PAM GROSSMAN

Dean, and George and Diane Weiss Professor of Education, Graduate School of Education

### MARK ALAN HUGHES

Professor of Practice, City and Regional Planning; Faculty Director, Kleinman Center for Energy Policy, Weitzman School of Design

### JOHN JACKSON, JR.

Walter H. Annenberg Dean, Annenberg School for Communication; Richard Perry University Professor

### JOHN MACDONALD

Professor of Criminology and Sociology; Faculty Director, Fels Institute of Government, Department of Criminology, School of Arts and Sciences

### FREDERICK STEINER

Dean and Paley Professor, Weitzman School of Design

## *Penn IUR Advisory Board*

### CHAIR: MARK ROSENBERG

Principal, MHR Fund Management

### VICE CHAIR: ALAN D. SCHNITZER

CEO, The Travelers Companies, Inc.

### P. DAVID BRAMBLE

Managing Partner, MCB Real Estate

### PATRICK BRETT

Managing Director, Citigroup

### KEVIN CHAVERS

Chairman, Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation

### MANUEL A. DIAZ

Senior Partner, Lydecker Diaz, LLC  
Former Mayor, City of Miami, FL

### DAMIEN DWIN

CEO and Founder, Lafayette Square

### PAUL FARMER

Former Executive Director & CEO, American Planning Association

### DAVID GALLO

Founder and Managing Member, Valinor Management, LLC

### RENÉE LEWIS GLOVER

Founder and Managing Member, The Catalyst Group, LLC

### JACQUES GORDON

Global Strategist, LaSalle Investment Management

### DOUG HAGAN

President, Krytar

### VIRGINIA HEPNER

Former CEO, Woodruff Arts Center

### J. ROBERT HILLIER

President, J. Robert Hillier

### WILLIAM LUKASHOK

Director, Prana Investments

### RACHEL KRAMER

Vice President and Partner, The Richdale Group

### TOM MILLON

President & CEO, Capital Markets Coop.

### JESSICA MORGAN

Vice President, Lubert-Adler Real Estate Funds

### MARC H. MORIAL, ESQ.

President & CEO, National Urban League

### FAHD MUKHTAR

Director, Fatima Group

### MELANIE NUSSDORF

Partner, Steptoe & Johnson

### LAWRENCE PARKS

Co-Founder, Forethought Advisors

### EGBERT PERRY

Chairman & CEO, The Integral Group

### JEFFREY POSS

Partner, Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP

### RICHARD P. RICHMAN

Chairman, The Richman Group, Inc.

### JONATHAN F.P. ROSE

President, Jonathan Rose Companies

### DIANE ROSEN

Of Counsel, Ortoli Rosenstadt

### ROBERT J.T. ROSENFELD

Principal, JBG Rosenfeld Retail

### MOLLY ROUSE-TERLEVICH

Community Volunteer and Political Fundraiser

### DEBORAH RATNER SALZBERG

Washington, D.C., Region Chairman, Brookfield Properties

### EVERETT SANDS

CEO, Lendistry, LLC.

### DAVID SHAPIRO

Partner, Corporate Department, Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz

### ROBERT STEWART

Managing Director, The JBG Companies

### MICHAEL TABB

Managing Principal, Red Rock Global

### KENNETH TANENBAUM

Vice Chairman, Kilmer Van Nostrand Co. Limited

### SAMEH NAGUIB WAHBA

World Bank's Regional Director, Sustainable Development in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Region