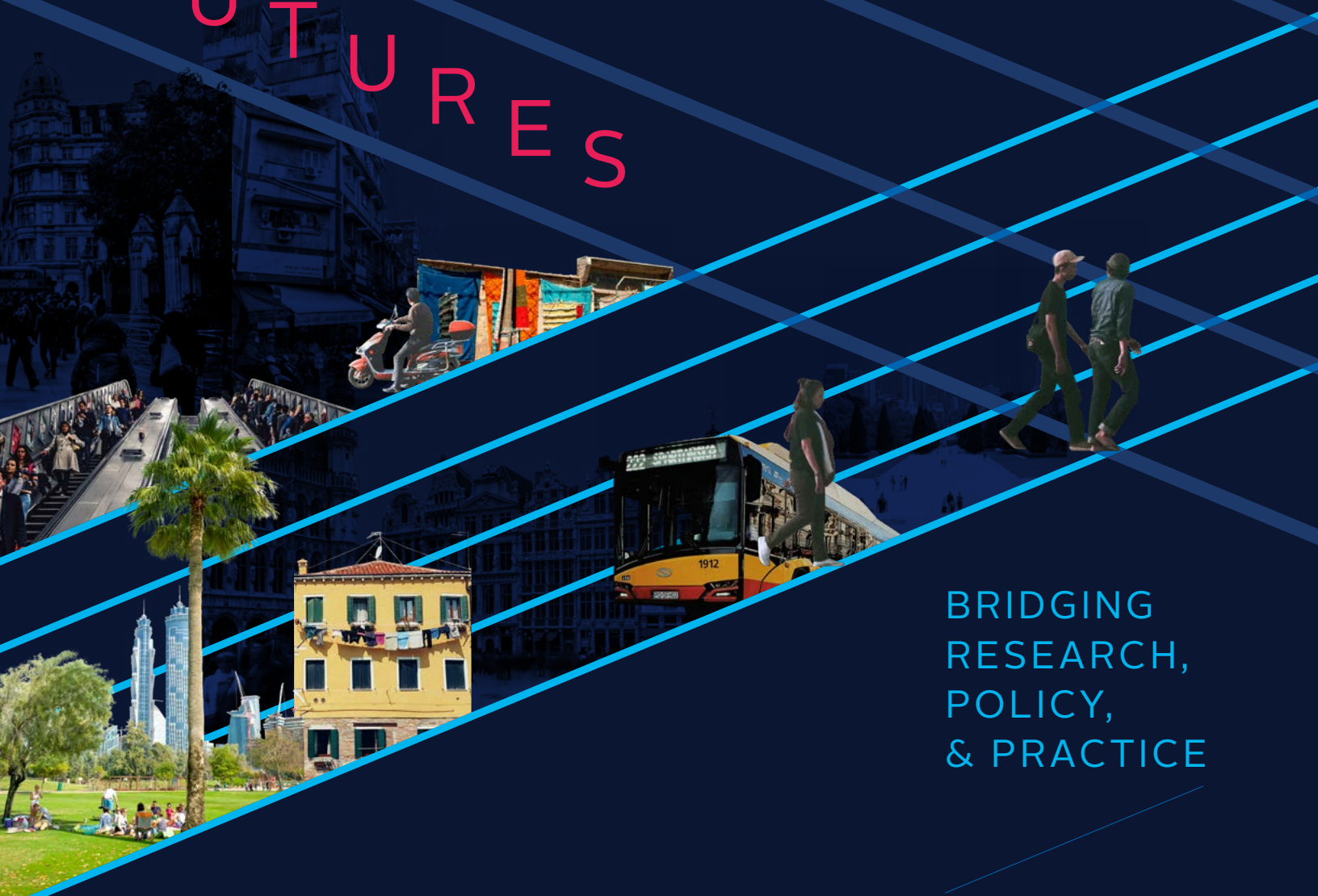


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RESEARCH,
POLICY,
& PRACTICE

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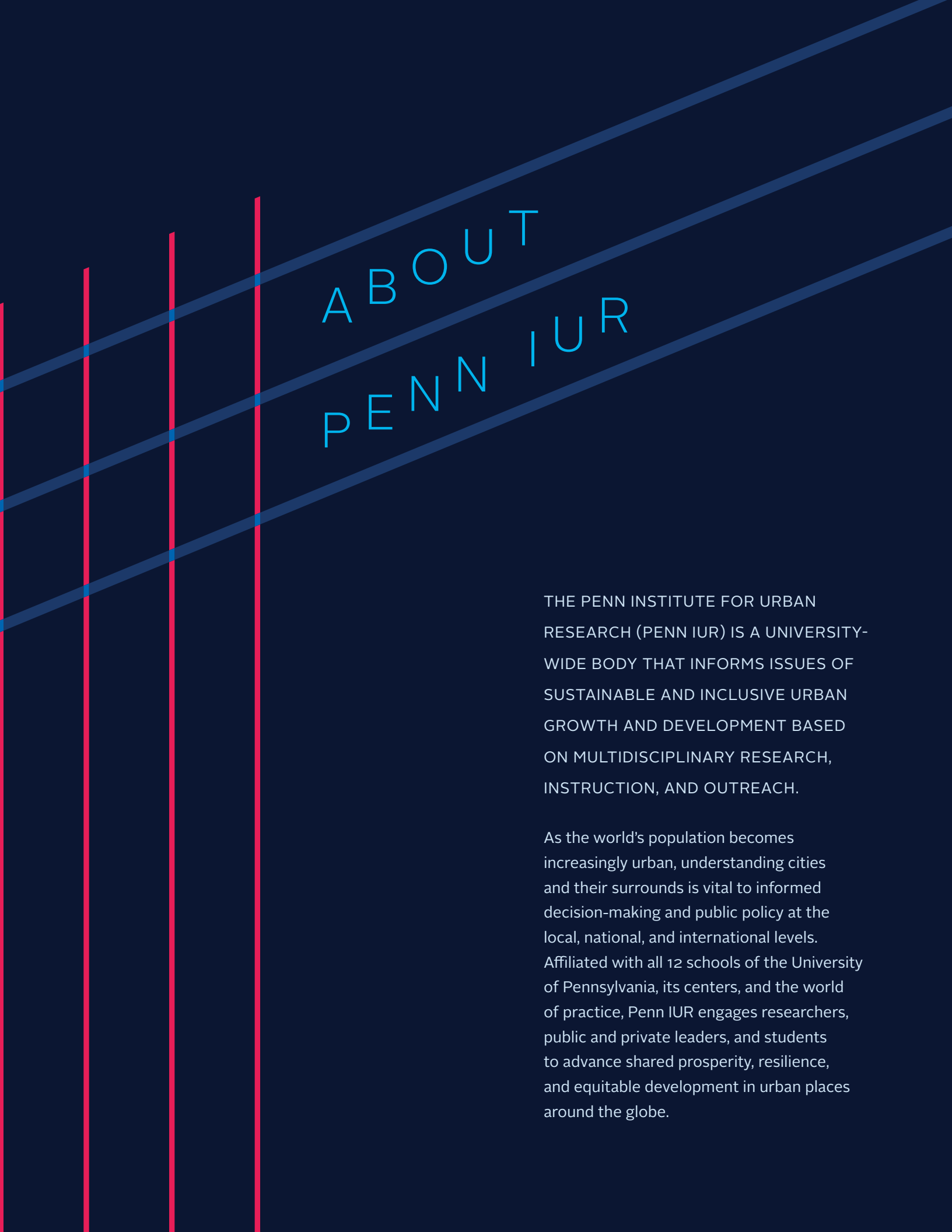
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ABOUT PENN IUR

THE PENN INSTITUTE FOR URBAN RESEARCH (PENN IUR) IS A UNIVERSITY-WIDE BODY THAT INFORMS ISSUES OF SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE URBAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT BASED ON MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH, INSTRUCTION, AND OUTREACH.

As the world's population becomes increasingly urban, understanding cities and their surrounds is vital to informed decision-making and public policy at the local, national, and international levels. Affiliated with all 12 schools of the University of Pennsylvania, its centers, and the world of practice, Penn IUR engages researchers, public and private leaders, and students to advance shared prosperity, resilience, and equitable development in urban places around the globe.



M E S S A G E
T H E P R O V O S T F R O M
A N D V I C E
P R O V O S T
F O R R E S E A R C H

JOHN L. JACKSON, JR.
Provost; Richard Perry University Professor

DAWN BONNELL
Senior Vice Provost for Research; Henry Robinson Towne
Professor of Engineering and Applied Science

As Penn IUR embarks on its twentieth anniversary year, Penn’s commitment to our shared communities is stronger than ever.

The University’s new strategic framework, *In Principle and Practice*, reaffirms our core identity as a university anchored in Philadelphia and committed to deepening our connections with our neighbors. It further ties these goals to ideals of collaboration, interconnection, engagement, and innovation—values that Penn IUR has vividly embodied for two decades.

In Principle and Practice calls us to create an interwoven university, where “the more ideas and people from all backgrounds we bring to the table—and the more interconnected and less siloed our community—the more rigorous, more resourceful, and more effective Penn is.” This mission positions the work of Penn IUR ever more centrally at the heart of our shared goals. More important, Penn IUR’s programs and publications remind us that we are interwoven not only within our campus, but also as citizens of our collective and interconnected communities.

The impacts of Penn research on these communities are not simply ripple effects. The work of Penn IUR encourages us to see them as concentric geographies. Our local, national, and global communities influence and interpenetrate each other like catalysts, in unpredictable and mutually reinforcing ways. The innovative, cross-disciplinary research projects that define Penn are shaped by our urban environments, and they in turn help to transform those environments for the future.

For twenty years, Penn IUR has reminded us that our urban environments—and their anchor institutions—are the engines of essential global changes, empowering us to accelerate interdisciplinary connections, grow opportunities around the world, foster leadership and service, and lead on the great challenges of our time.

We congratulate Penn IUR on these twenty years of invaluable contributions to research, policy, and practice in service of our sustainable urban futures—and we look forward to many more years of engaged and inventive transformations.



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 and Education, Department of City & Regional Planning,
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Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research;
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Penn IUR bridges research, policy, and practice to fulfill its mission of furthering our collective understanding of cities, their role in shaping the world, and their ability to contribute to a sustainable future for all. Through its domestic and international programs, Penn IUR engages scholars, policymakers, practitioners, students, and the public. Its impact is due in great part to Penn IUR's collaboration with many partners across Penn's campus and around the globe.

This past year, Penn IUR's U.S. research focused on housing, the post-COVID economy, and climate change. Research projects, convenings, and publications explored the challenges and the solutions for increasing affordable housing; local zoning restrictions and their effect on the cost of housing; the economic impact of remote work; and risk dynamics of flooding on the housing ecosystem including lenders, homeowners, and insurers.

Penn IUR's international work looked at financing urban climate resilience and assessing urban innovation. Penn IUR's ongoing City Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Finance Initiative (C²IFI) identified gaps in funding for urban nature-based solutions (NbS) and helped launch and support the 80-member Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Global Commission for Urban Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Finance, co-chaired by Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris; Eduardo Paes, mayor of Rio de Janeiro; and Jeffrey Sachs, economist and SDSN president. The latter project included the conceptual development of a Green Cities Guarantee Fund, aligning city interests within the reform of the world's multilateral development banks, and contributed key messages for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) upcoming special report on cities. In addition, Penn IUR worked with the Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation to craft and test an urban innovation assessment tool and contributed to *Harnessing Urban Innovation to Unlock the Sustainable Development Goals* published this year by Springer Nature.

Penn IUR's publication program disseminates its research and that of its network of Penn IUR affiliated scholars through various outlets. This year, Penn IUR worked with Penn Press to publish three monographs in The City in the 21st Century series including

former Bogotá (Colombia) mayor Enrique Peñalosa Londoño's much-anticipated *Equality and the City: Urban Innovations for All Citizens*. Penn IUR's monthly *Urban Link* offered readers current insights from Penn IUR Faculty Fellows and Scholars. The *Urban Research eJournal*, published in conjunction with the Social Science Research Network (SSRN), now is a repository of more than 9,000 urban focused papers that have been downloaded some 1.6 million times.

This year, Penn IUR's convening schedule covered a wide range of subjects. The Special Briefing on the Fiscal Outlook of State and Local Governments, a monthly live virtual discussion and an associated podcast, covered such timely topics as "Rolling Out the \$1.2 Trillion Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act—What's Being Built and What's in the Pipeline" featuring U.S. Representative Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and "America's \$900 Billion Water Crisis" with Penn's own Howard Nuekrug. Penn IUR and the Volcker Alliance partner on this series that reached more than 10,000 viewers/listeners this year. Penn IUR's ongoing in-person and virtual expert meetings on pressing urban issues included 17 events discussing, for example, "AI in the City," "Powering the Slum: Exploring Alternative Forms of Energy for Informal Settlements," and "Economic Opportunity for Everyone: The Role of CDFIs in Advancing and Building Opportunity."

Penn IUR's student programming attracts young urbanists and scholars from Penn's undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs. In Fall, 2023 Penn IUR had a special opportunity to co-sponsor a graduate course, Topics in International Development: Reconstruction of Small Cities in Ukraine, with the Department of City & Regional Planning and the Diplomacy Lab, U.S. Department of State. The students' work resulted in a plan for the reconstruction of Bucha, Ukraine, a war-torn site 15 kilometers from Kyiv. They presented the work at the Biden Center, Washington, D.C., to an audience that included Oksana Markarova, the Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States, and officials from the departments of State and Housing and Urban Development. During the year, the Penn IUR Fellows in Urban Leadership traveled to New York and Washington, D.C. to meet with key public and private decision-makers in those cities. Urban-focused PhD students from several Penn schools shared their research in regular meetings.

As we introduce the work of Penn IUR's 19th year, we wish to thank the many people on whose support Penn IUR depends: the Advisory Board who offer invaluable experience and advice, the Penn IUR scholarly network of faculty and external experts who contribute vital new knowledge, the Penn students who participate in Penn IUR programs, the audiences who attend events and stimulate important conversations, and last, but not least, Penn IUR's energetic staff whose diligent work make Penn IUR and its many undertakings flourish.



Top left photo by Shreya Bansal (United States Virgin Islands).



CURRENT RESEARCH

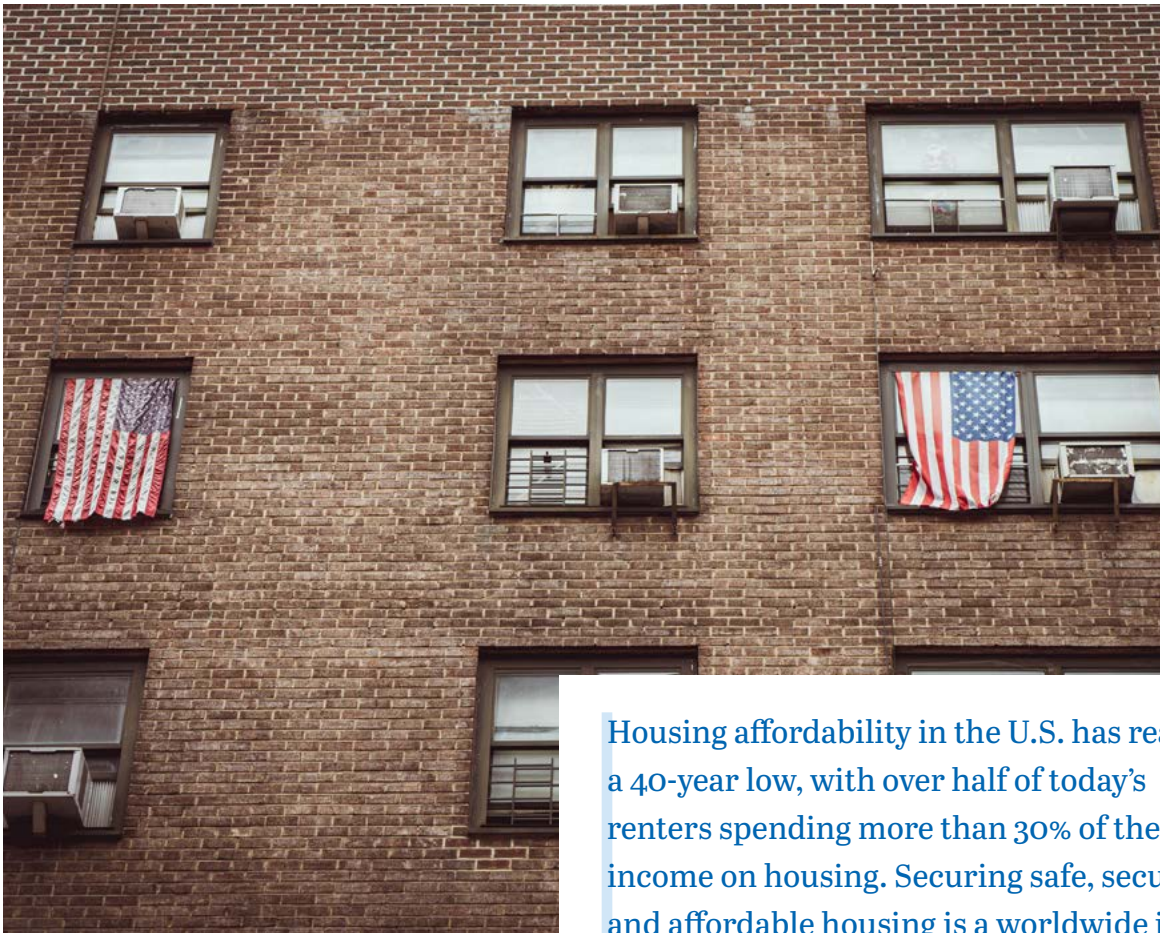
PENN IUR'S RESEARCH INITIATIVES
GENERATE NEW SCHOLARSHIP
AND PROMOTE THE EXCHANGE OF
KNOWLEDGE AMONG SCHOLARS AND
PRACTITIONERS ACROSS DISCIPLINES.

DOMESTIC

Penn IUR's U.S.-focused work centers around the challenges of housing affordability, remote work, local zoning restrictions, and flood risk.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing affordability in the U.S. has reached a 40-year low, with over half of today's renters spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Securing safe, secure, and affordable housing is a worldwide issue critical for the long-term sustainability of cities and metropolitan regions. Penn IUR's researchers are addressing this issue by analyzing market trends, evaluating the costs and impacts of climate-induced risks on housing stock, and exploring shared equity homeownership models to assist lower-income and minority households.



Housing affordability in the U.S. has reached a 40-year low, with over half of today's renters spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Securing safe, secure, and affordable housing is a worldwide issue critical for the long-term sustainability of cities and metropolitan regions.

REMOTE WORK

Remote work has upended cities worldwide, emptying once lively central business districts and offices while workers flee to cheaper housing. Penn IUR's applied research considers the impact of flexible work models on downtown economies while examining home affordability, allowable housing units per acre, and climate change financing to aid cities facing these new urban realities. The post-pandemic work-from-home trend has fundamentally changed central business districts, public transit, and city life. Penn IUR's Special Briefing series and papers with the Volcker Alliance examine the question of "Doom Loop or Boom Loop?" analyzing how American cities are responding to the challenge of remote work.

NATIONAL LAND USE DATABASE

How local zoning restricts the availability of land supply for housing is central to understanding housing affordability and economic growth. This year, Penn IUR completed its National Land Use Regulatory Index (NLURI), a multi-year project analyzing local zoning restrictions. The resulting database, now available to Wharton scholars, enables aggregating census block group data more granularly at metro, county, and state levels. Further research examines regulatory interdependence among cities and estimates the spillover effects of regulation, contributing to a broader understanding of land use regulation's impact on housing prices.



FLOOD RISK

Flooding is the most frequent and costliest natural disaster in the United States. Increased storms and sea level rise due to climate change expose the U.S. housing market to greater risk. With scientists predicting more serious losses in the future due to increased development in flood-prone areas and changing climate patterns, Penn IUR's multi-year effort to shed light on these risks and their impacts is increasingly urgent. Through a series of papers, Penn IUR examines who will bear the cost of this increasing risk. (See "[Climate Risk In Mortgage Markets: Evidence from Hurricanes Harvey And Irma](#)"). Currently, most of the risk is being borne by insurance, local governments, and homeowners, as well as taxpayers, rather than government-sponsored entities like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The research also provides insights for future research and appropriate adaptations and policy action needed to achieve equity and efficiency. Research on the impacts to affordability in risk-exposed areas of the country, including coastal floodplains and wildfire zones in the western U.S., remains ongoing.





Above: “Rooftop Garden,” by Sudip Maiti (Kolkata, India).

Right: Photo by Syed Mahabul Kader (Dhaka, Bangladesh).

INTERNATIONAL

Penn IUR focused its international work on understanding the impacts, financial challenges, and innovative solutions for rapid urbanization faced by emerging economy cities against a background of climate change and biodiversity loss. Guiding work on these phenomena are several global agreements, which include the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement. To achieve the SDGs—particularly Goal 11, which aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”—and to keep the rise in temperature below 1.5°C, cities will need to foster innovative programs and invest in both hard and soft infrastructure. Penn IUR’s research includes evaluating urban innovation across the world to develop tools for city leaders to assess and improve their innovation systems.



CLIMATE-RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING INITIATIVE (C²IFI)

The C²IFI initiative engages in research to understand and enhance the current landscape of climate-resilient infrastructure finance in cities. As the world faces the results of high, unprecedented rates of urbanization along with global warming, it cannot keep up with needed funding for adaptation and mitigation. Further, cities produce 75% of greenhouse gases (GHG) and are responsible for 70% of world GDP, but only 1% of the annual global climate finance reaches them. One of the most important financing gaps is in nature-based solutions (NbS), especially urban NbS, strategies at the center of adaptation, resilience, and biodiversity.

Penn IUR researchers are working on a multi-year project with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) focusing on urban NbS finance. The first step was a discovery effort to gauge the global level of urban NbS funding, reported in “2023 State of Finance for Nature in Cities: Time to Assess.” The supplemental report revealed the dearth of data and recommended the development of a city financial tracking framework to form the backbone of an urban NbS database. In a second step, Penn IUR researchers are developing and testing a comprehensive city NbS finance framework to track urban NbS within municipal budget processes.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS NETWORK (SDSN) GLOBAL COMMISSION FOR URBAN SDG FINANCE

The SDSN Global Commission for Urban SDG Finance, composed of mayors and leading finance and urban practitioners and scholars, was formally launched in July 2023 by the mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo; mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Eduardo Paes; and the economist Jeffrey Sachs to develop and champion innovative ideas and solutions for increasing urban SDG finance in different geographies and contexts. The commission and the task forces met regularly, including in December at the U.N. Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai. This year, the commission prepared a draft recommendation report for its one-year plenary meeting at Paris City Hall in July 2024.

As the Commission’s secretariat, Penn IUR supports the Commission’s objectives and its six task forces that shape their recommendations, building around four initiatives:

- **RESEARCH:** Contribute to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Climate Change and Cities by promoting dedicated resources and knowledge-sharing.
- **REFORM:** Make urban climate finance a key component of multilateral development banks (MDB) reform agenda by integrating urban content into country platforms through multilevel coordination and pipelines of project portfolios.
- **READINESS:** Address systemic misalignments that impede collaboration between public and private sectors to promote enabling environments for climate action investments.
- **ACTION:** Design and operationalize a Green Cities Guarantee Fund to harness international demand to expand direct access to climate finance for local governments.

This year, the Commission grew its ranks, adding several new members to its network, including Yvonne Aki-Sawyer, Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone; Giuseppe Sala, Mayor of Milan, Italy; and Erion Veliaj, Mayor of Tirana, Albania, among other notable figures. For more information about the Commission supporting urban climate finance, visit urbansdgfinance.org.



Mauricio Rodas, Penn IUR Visiting Scholar and former Mayor of Quito, with Anne Hidalgo, Mayor of Paris, and Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Center for Sustainable Development, at a Commission meeting in New York in September 2023.

The Civitas Novus Assessment methodology is designed to help the public sector address climate change and other urgent issues, reimagining how cities can become more resilient, equitable, and nature-positive.

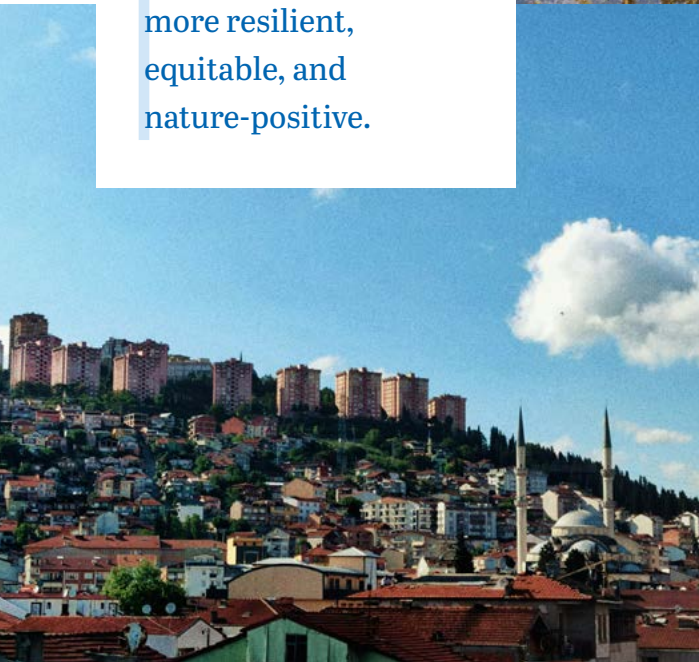


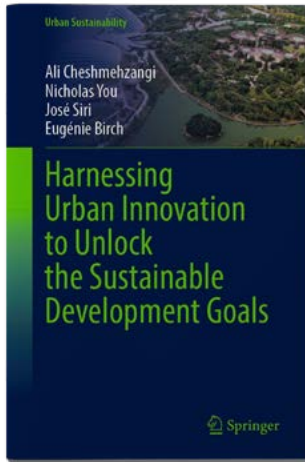
Above: "Discomposing Space," by Dhivya Arasappan (Rail Park in Philadelphia, PA).

GUANGZHOU INNOVATION PROJECT— THE CIVITAS NOVUS ASSESSMENT

In partnership with the Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation, Penn IUR researchers published an urban innovation assessment tool in 2023 to help leaders evaluate competencies that can be applied holistically to a wide range of urban challenges. After completing an extensive landscape review of research on urban innovation, Penn IUR designed a methodology framework to help cities understand innovation as an ecosystem of learning opportunities and exploration beyond the typical view of innovation. The methodology is designed to help the public sector address climate change and other urgent issues, reimagining how cities can become more resilient, equitable, and nature-positive.

Penn IUR began beta-testing the methodology with cities in the spring of 2024, collecting feedback from Lincoln Institute's Legacy Cities Initiative members. Penn IUR then created an online version for its first city, Kocaeli, Turkey. Moving forward, Penn IUR will explore the results of the assessment and engage additional cities in Latin America and Africa.





HARNESSING URBAN INNOVATION TO UNLOCK THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SPRINGER NATURE, 2024 | ISBN : 978-981-99-9970-5

Penn IUR supported a new publication in the spring of 2024, authored by Ali Cheshmehzangi, Nicholas You, José Siri, and Penn IUR Co-Director Eugénie Birch, exploring how urban innovation could accelerate the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs). **Harnessing Urban Innovation to Unlock the Sustainable Development Goals** puts together global examples of urban innovation initiatives, highlighting practical, policy-oriented, social, and technological interventions from winners of the Fifth Guangzhou Award for Urban Innovation.

The case studies are divided into four clusters of “green cities,” “inclusive cities,” “resilient cities,” and “healthy cities,” mapping out various global examples of urban innovation for sustainable pathways and directions. The overarching aim is to provide a holistic overview of the urban innovation sustainable development nexus, which would help future policy development, paradigm shifts, and technological applications.

“Gol Talab,” by Muhammad Amdad Hossain (Dhaka, Bangladesh).





Top left photo by Jophel Ybioso (Manila, Philippines).



TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

PENN IUR CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AMONG RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS THROUGH PUBLICATIONS, INCLUDING *URBAN LINK*, THE SSRN *URBAN RESEARCH eJOURNAL*, THE CITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY BOOK SERIES WITH PENN PRESS, AND A VARIETY OF SPECIAL REPORTS.



SSRN URBAN RESEARCH eJOURNAL

Penn IUR's *Urban Research eJournal*, published twice weekly through the Social Science Research Network (SSRN), gathers and distributes new research that addresses the governance, policy, economics, design, and social issues that surround global urbanization. Edited by Penn IUR Co-Directors Eugénie Birch and Susan Wachter and overseen by a prestigious Advisory Board, its 9,198 papers have been downloaded 247,388 times this year alone. Featured papers published this past fiscal year include:

- **Raghid Shehayeb**, Dresden University of Technology; **Regine Ortlepp, Jochen Schanze**, Leibniz Institute of Ecological and Regional Development (IOER), [“An Indicator-Based Methodology for the Drought and Heat Risk Assessment of Urban Green Infrastructure”](#)
- **Federico Caprotti**, University of Exeter; **Catalina Duarte**, London School of Economics; **Simon Joss**, Political Science and University of Glasgow, [“Paranoid Urbanism, Post-Political Urban Practice and Ten Critical Reflections on the 15-Minute City”](#)
- **Geraldo Cerqueiro**, Católica-Lisbon SBE; **Isaac Hacamo**, Indiana University Kelley School of Business, Department of Finance; **Pedro S. Raposo**, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, [“Priced-Out: Rent Control, Wages, and Inequality”](#)
- **Albert Saiz**, IZA Institute of Labor Economics; MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning; **Arianna Salazar Miranda**, MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, [“Understanding Urban Economies, Land Use, and Social Dynamics in the City: Big Data and Measurement,”](#) MIT Center for Real Estate Research Paper No. 23/19
- **Maryam Naghibi**, Delft University of Technology, [“From Neglected Spaces to Water Stewards: Urban Acupuncture’s Transformative Role in Delta Cities”](#)
- **Enrique Santiago Iglesias, Gustavo Romanillos, Wenzhe Sun, Jan-Dirk Schmöcker**, Kyoto University; **Borja Moya-Gómez, Juan Carlos García-Palomares**, Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM), [“Light in the Darkness: Urban Nightlife, Analyzing the Impact and Recovery of COVID-19 Using Mobile Phone Data”](#)

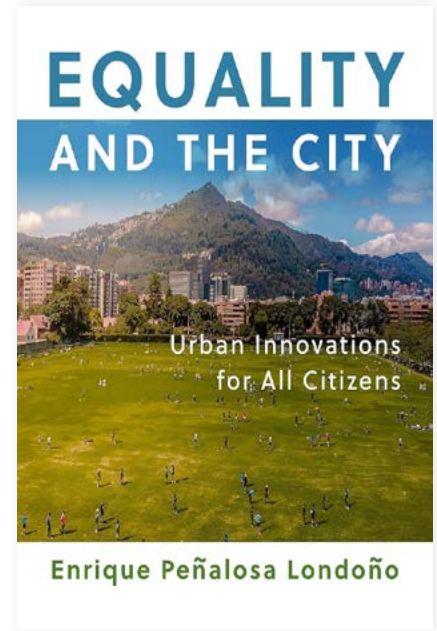
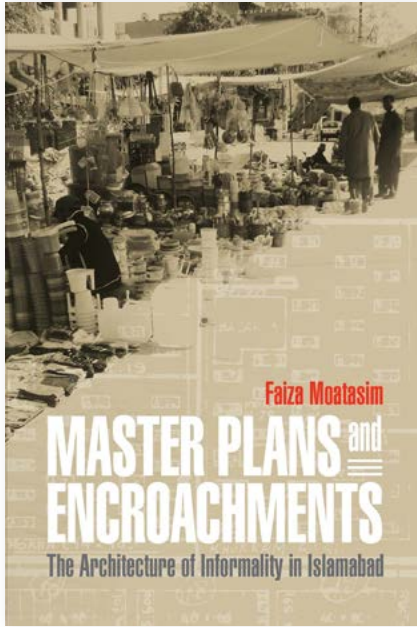
Above left: “Canopy of Color,” by Angela Ye (Central Park, NY).

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*"Manila Zoo," by Jophel Ybiossa
(Manila, Philippines).*



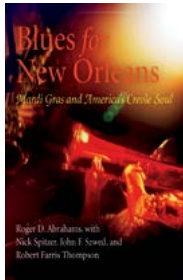
THE CITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY SERIES, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS

Penn Press's The City in the 21st Century Series—edited by Penn IUR's Co-Directors, Eugénie Birch and Susan Wachter—is a collection of more than 50 works on urban architecture, anthropology, economics, history, planning, political science, sociology, and urban design. The volumes published in 2023–2024 are:

- ***Master Plans and Encroachments: The Architecture of Informality in Islamabad*** (October 2023), by Faiza Moatasim, examines informality in the high-modernist city of Islamabad as a strategic conformity to official planning schemes and regulations rather than as a deviation from them.
- ***Underground: Dreams and Degradations in Bucharest*** (April 2024), by Bruce O'Neill, details how developers and municipal officials have invested tremendous sums of money to gentrify and expand Bucharest below city sidewalks to provide upwardly mobile residents with space to live, work, and play in an overcrowded and increasingly unaffordable city center.
- ***Equality and the City: Urban Innovations for All Citizens*** (April 2024), by Enrique Peñalosa Londoño, draws on his experience as mayor of Bogotá, Colombia, to share his perspective on the issues facing developing cities, especially sustainable transportation and equal access to public space.

See [pages 32](#), [48](#), and [50](#) to read excerpts.

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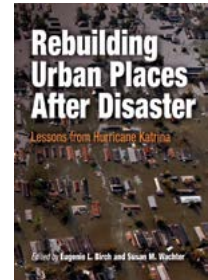
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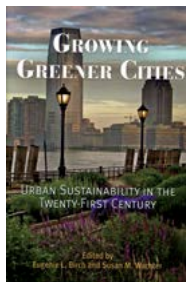
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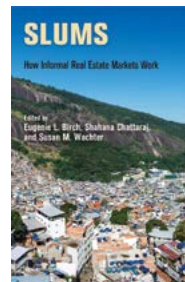
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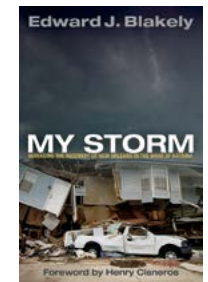
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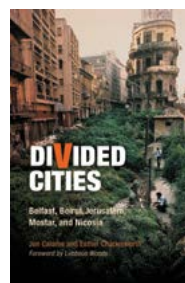
EDWARD J. BLAKELY, 2011



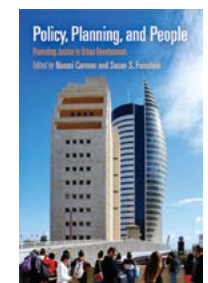
PETER HENDEE BROWN, 2008



PETER HENDEE BROWN, 2015



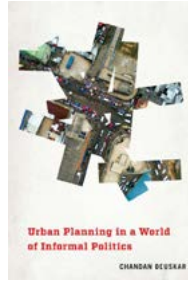
JON CALAME AND
ESTHER CHARLESWORTH, 2011



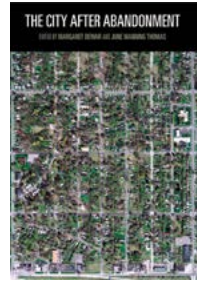
NAOMI CARMON AND
SUSAN FAINSTEIN, 2013



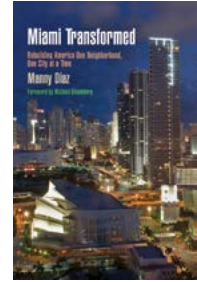
RAM CNAAN WITH STEPHANIE C. BODDIE, CHARLENE C. MCGREW, AND JENNIFER KANG, 2006



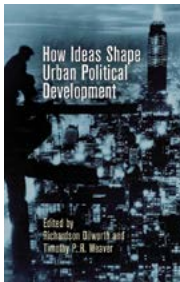
CHANDAN DEUSKAR, 2022



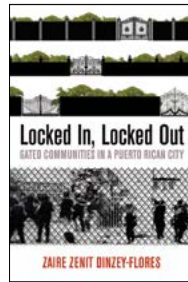
MARGARET DEWAR AND JUNE MANNING THOMAS, EDITORS, 2012



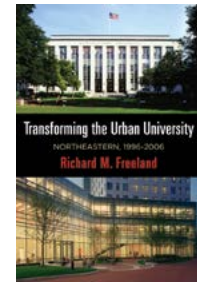
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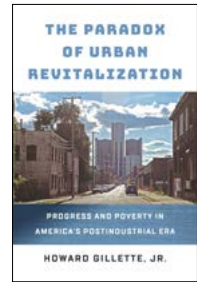
RICHARDSON DILWORTH AND TIMOTHY P. R. WEAVER, EDITORS, 2020



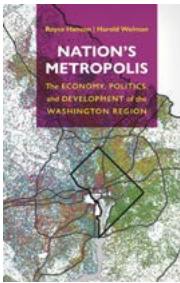
ZAIRE ZENIT DINZEY-FLORES, 2013



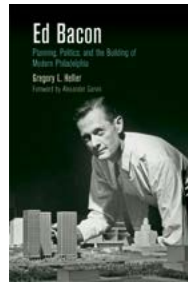
RICHARD FREELAND, 2019



HOWARD GILLETTE, JR., 2022



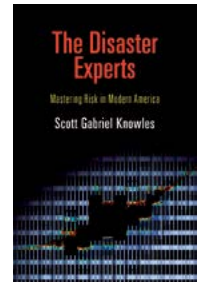
ROYCE HANSON AND HAROLD WOLMAN, 2023



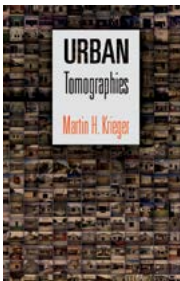
GREGORY L. HELLER, 2013



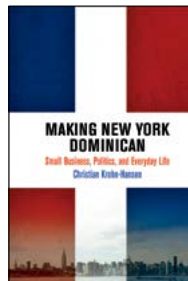
MICHAEL B. KATZ, 2011



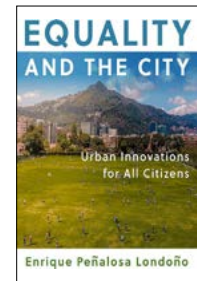
SCOTT GABRIEL KNOWLES, 2011



MARTIN KRIEGER, 2011



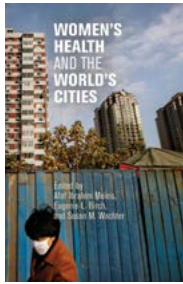
CHRISTIAN KROHN-HANSEN, 2012



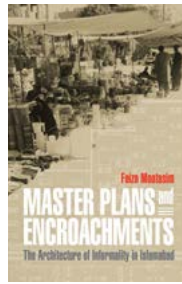
ENRIQUE PEÑALOSA LONDOÑO, 2024



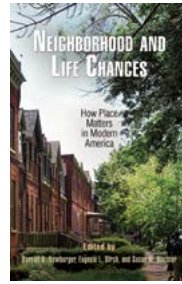
JENNIFER MACK AND MICHAEL HERZFELD, EDITORS, 2020



AFAF IBRAHIM MELEIS,
EUGÉNIE L. BIRCH,
AND SUSAN M. WACHTER,
EDITORS, 2011



FAIZA MOATASIM, 2023



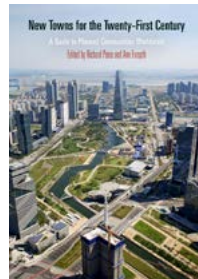
HARRIET B. NEWBURGER,
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AND SUSAN M. WACHTER,
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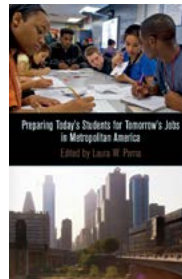
MICHAEL A. NUTTER, 2017



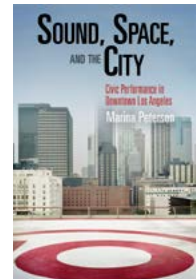
BRUCE O'NEILL, 2024



RICHARD PEISER AND
ANN FORSYTH, EDITORS, 2021



LAURA W. PERNA, EDITOR, 2012



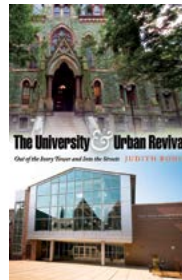
MARINA PETERSON, 2010



MARINA PETERSON
AND GARY MCDONOGH,
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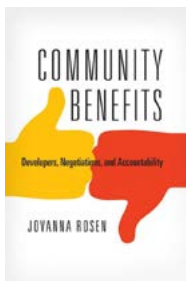
VINCENT J. REINA,
WENDELL E. PRITCHETT,
AND SUSAN M. WACHTER,
EDITORS, 2020



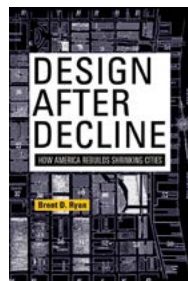
JUDITH RODIN, 2007



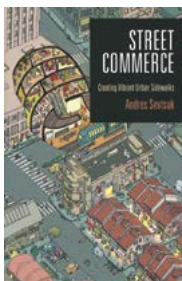
CRISTINA D. ROSAN, 2016



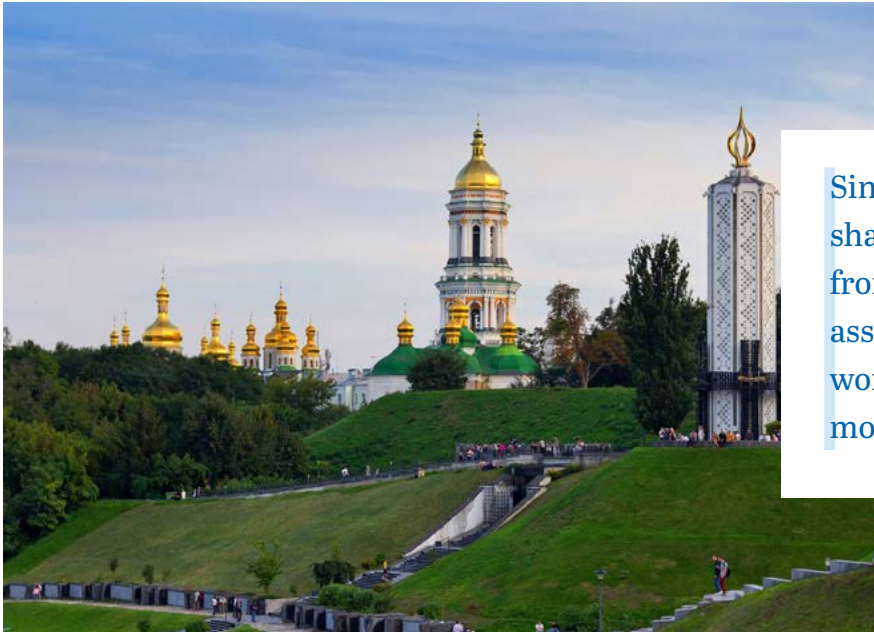
JOVANNA ROSEN, 2023



BRENT D. RYAN, 2012



ANDRES SEVTSUK, 2020



Since 2012, *Urban Link* has shared urban scholarship from its network with associates from around the world and today reaches more than 10,000 subscribers.

URBAN LINK

Urban Link is Penn IUR's monthly online digest that features commentary on current urban topics and highlights the Institute's news, events, and activities. Since 2012, *Urban Link* has shared urban scholarship from its network with associates from around the world and today reaches more than 10,000 subscribers. Feature stories from this year included:

- September 2023
["Announcing the 2023–24 Fellows in Urban Leadership"](#)
- October 2023
["Updates from the Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance"](#)
- November 2023
["Impact of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act"](#)
- December 2023
["Urban Progress at COP28"](#)
- January 2024
["Expert Voices 2024 | Remote Work: Its Impact on Cities"](#)
- February 2024
["Penn Students Present a Greener, Urban Ukraine"](#)
- March 2024
["Future of Cities"](#)
- April 2024
["Celebrating Resilience with the 2024 Nussdorf Urban Leadership Prize"](#)
- May 2024
["Paris Mayor to host the SDSN Global Commission"](#)

Subscribe to *Urban Link* [here](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Expert Voices

Every year, Penn IUR invites an array of experts to share their views on a critical current topic.



This year, we asked scholars and practitioners what they expected would happen with remote work trends—and how cities should respond to remote work’s impact on urban life.

Our commentators universally agreed that the trend of remote work is here to stay. Some noted the losses in commercial real estate value and cautioned that increased worker flexibility in terms of time and location may drive increased social isolation and climate-unfriendly development patterns. Others saw brighter outlooks for cities, arguing that over time, they have responded to challenges with innovations and will do so in the future. Adaptive reuse of real estate and more flexible development may be one positive outcome. Remote work could also potentially address cities’ racial inequalities. All in all, the need to reimagine cities may enable society to address larger goals of equity, climate adaptation, and opportunity.

Technology will play a key role. One expert observed defense tech, fintech, MedTech, and other tech startups with ecosystem support may re-invigorate downtowns. This new urbanism “adds digital connectivity to physical clustering and agglomeration,” said another, redefining cities’ borders altogether.

Featured experts for 2024 included the following:

- **Clarence E. Anthony**, CEO and Executive Director, National League of Cities; former Mayor, South Bay, Florida
“Cities Can Be More Livable in the Future”
- **Nicholas A. Bloom**, William D. Eberle Professor of Economics, Stanford University; co-founder of *wfhresearch.com*
“Work From Home Has Stabilized, But Will Grow in the Future”
- **Richard Florida**, Professor, Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto; Distinguished Fellow, NYU’s School of Professional Studies
“The Rise of the Meta City”
- **Prema Gupta**, President and CEO, Center City District in Philadelphia
“Downtowns Can Offer Equity, Climate Adaptation, and Opportunity”
- **Bruce Katz**, Distinguished Fellow, Lindy Institute; Founding Director, Nowak Metro Finance Lab, Drexel University
“Remote Work and the Next Downtown”
- **Tracy Hadden Loh**, Fellow, Brookings Institution
“Navigating The Perception and Reality of Remote Work”
- **Marc Morial**, President and CEO, National Urban League; former Mayor, New Orleans
“Remote Work Can Be a Tool to Repair Racial Inequalities”
- **Harriet Tregoning**, Director, New Urban Mobility (NUMO) Alliance, World Resource Institute
“Cities Should Plan for Adaptation and Flexible Development”
- **Stijn van Nieuwerburg**, Earle W. Kazis and Benjamin Schore Professor of Real Estate and Professor of Finance, Columbia University’s Graduate School of Business
“Work from Home Has Resulted in Massive Real Estate Losses”
- **Richard Voith**, Chairman and Founding Principal, Econsult Solutions Inc.
“An Economic Outlook on the Impacts of Work from Home”

Read their thoughts in full [here](#).

BRIEFS AND SPECIAL REPORTS

Penn IUR's briefs and special reports offer in-depth research and analysis on timely urban topics from Penn IUR researchers, faculty fellows, and scholars. In 2023–24, publications included:

- **Eugénie Birch and James Kwame Mensah**
“Powering the Slum II: Alternative Sources of Energy in Accra’s Informal Settlements”*
 September 2023

- **Katie Ferguson and Derek Hyra**,
 The Metropolitan Center, American University; **Katherine Marinari**,
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; **Eugénie Birch and Amanda Lloyd**, University of Pennsylvania; **Fitz Nicholas**,
 Wilson Center
“A Comparative Study of International Financial Models to Increase Long-term Rental Housing Supply in South Korea”
 November 2023

- **John Landis**
“Good and Bad News About Income Inequality in Urban America”
 December 2023

- **John Landis**
“Calculating and Applying the Tract-Based Concentrated Poverty Index”*
 December 2023

- **Richard Voith, Susan Wachter, David Stanek, and Hyojin Lee**
“Doom Loop or Boom Loop? Work from Home and the Challenges Facing America’s Big Cities”*
 May 2024

- **Richard Voith, Susan Wachter, and David Stanek**
“Reflections on Doom Loop or Boom Loop Work from Home and the Challenges Facing America’s Big Cities”
 June 2024

- **Meagan Ehlenz**
“The Challenge of Affordable Housing: Shared Equity as a Way Forward”*
 June 2024

- **Eugénie Birch, Laura Frances, and Delfina Vildosa**
“Key Messages for Urban Climate Finance” in the IPCC Special Report on Cities*
 June 2024

*See [Penn IUR in Print on page 30](#) to read select excerpts.

SPECIAL BRIEFING ON THE FISCAL OUTLOOK OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Special Briefing on the Fiscal Outlook of State and Local Governments is a monthly event series and podcast of sixty-minute online conversations featuring experts from national research networks, along with other leading academics, economists, and federal, state, and local leaders exploring a range of challenges facing cities and states’ fiscal health. Each episode is moderated by Penn IUR Fellow and Volcker Alliance Senior Director William Glasgall and Penn IUR Co-Director Susan Wachter. The series is co-sponsored by the Volcker Alliance, The Century Foundation, and members of the Penn IUR Advisory Board.

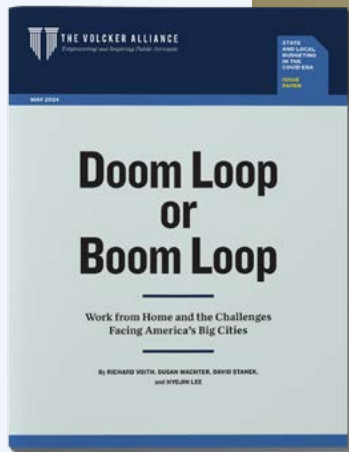
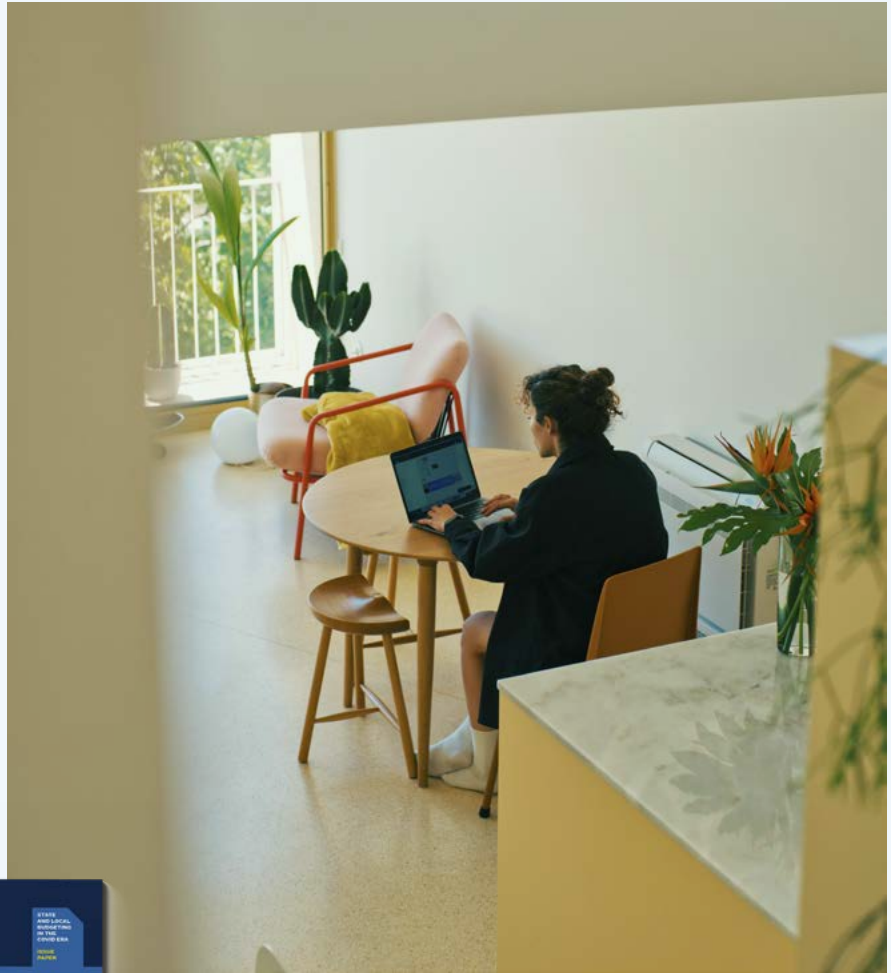
For the full list of this year’s Special Briefings, [see page 56](#). To listen to recordings of the entire Special Briefings series, visit the Volcker Alliance or Penn IUR websites or any podcast platform.



SPOTLIGHT ON:

Doom Loop or Boom Loop

Cities across the country are adjusting to new urban realities post-COVID. Will the remote work challenge lead to a “Doom Loop” or “Boom Loop” for cities? This Special Briefing highlighted the permanence of remote work and the need for cities to take action to ensure future success.

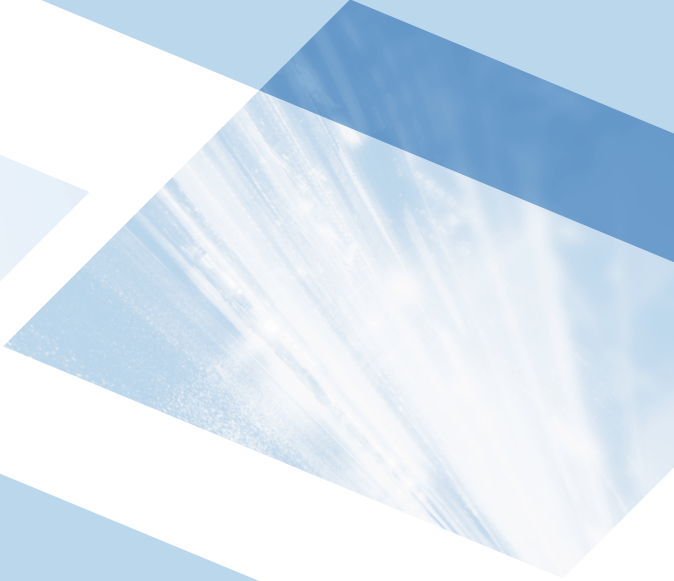
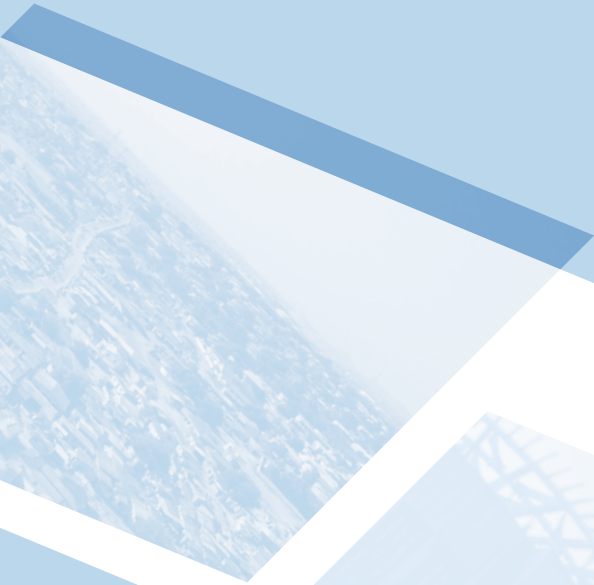


Penn IUR researchers contributed to a Volcker Alliance report, “[Doom Loop or Boom Loop: Work from Home and the Challenges Facing America's Big Cities](#),” followed by a [Special Briefing](#) discussion. A resulting brief, “[Reflections on Doom Loop or Boom Loop: Work from Home and the Challenges Facing America's Big Cities](#),” offered further insights into how cities can face the landscape of empty offices, struggling centers, and economic and fiscal woes.



PENN IUR IN PRINT

Penn IUR disseminates knowledge through books, briefs, white papers, journal articles, reports, and online publications. The following excerpts are from some of Penn IUR's texts published during 2023–24.





Faiza Moatasim

THE STRATEGIC MODALITIES OF INFORMAL SPACES



In cities today, informal modifications to the urban fabric are deeply enmeshed with formal planning procedures. *Master Plans and Encroachments: The Architecture of Informality in Islamabad* examines informality in Pakistan's high-modernist city as a strategic conformity to official schemes and regulations—rather than as a deviation from them. For the full text, visit pennpress.org.

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The first time I noticed France Colony (a low income informal settlement [in Islamabad]) was while shopping at the high end F-7 *markaz* (center) market (also known as the Jinnah Super market). On the southern side of the expensive market, France Colony's modest dwellings were stacked next to each other in a low-lying area, in sharp contrast to the wide avenues and upper-income, single-family residences all around. The visual disparity between the living conditions of the privileged and the underprivileged residents—whose homes were in close spatial proximity—was and still is too powerful for me to ignore. In hindsight, I realized that what made this city seem “different” to me was highlighted particularly in these situations of sociospatial disparity, when the pristine and modern template of the master plan seem to be interrupted by organically occurring spaces of poverty. These early impressions of Islamabad shaped my research interests as I started thinking about the histories of these informal places, how they came to be, and how they were able to stay in place.

As a child, I, of course didn't realize that France Colony was an encroachment on Islamabad's master plan. The city was conceived on paper in the late 1950s and early 1960s to be the new capital of Pakistan. It was designed by Greek architect–planner Constantinos A. Doxiadis according to the principles of high-modernist planning that dominated for much of the twentieth century. These principles proceeded from the conviction that scientific and technical rationality, professional expertise, and comprehensive planning could address all present and future urban needs around the world. Modernist master plans conceived in advance of construction called for a strict designation of various urban functions and clearly defined in distinct zones. But in all newly built, high-modernist capital cities of the post-World War II era, such as Islamabad, Brasilia (national capital of Brazil), and Chandigarh (state capital of India), unanticipated spaces, including low-income informal housing, emerged as soon as the state-of-the-art projects took shape.

Because unanticipated spaces were not part of the high-modernist planning ideology, they were categorized in early research on Chandigarh and Brasilia as “unplanned” or contradictory urban phenomena. This academic characterization aligns well with how people generally understand informal spaces as unplanned and spontaneous. In his seminal study on Brasilia, James Holston employs the framework of “premises and paradoxes” to explain the creation of the so-called urban unplanned spaces as contradictory elements embedded in the new capital city’s planning program. Holston conceives of Brasilia as a city “founded on a paradox” since its basic “premise” was “a negation of the existing conditions in Brazil.” While Holston’s critique of a high-modernist city successfully exposes the hegemonic ideology of high-modernist planning and its tendency to reject unaccounted for urban phenomena, my chief concern in this book is to show how the modalities of informal spaces in Islamabad are predicated precisely on its modernist master plan and regulations. *Master Plans and Encroachments* reveals that the negation of existing conditions in the master plan creates and sustains certain kinds of informality and that this interplay between formal and informal processes can occasionally result in a revision of the master plan itself. Islamabad’s master plan is not simply a blueprint that guides future urban development or makes its violations apparent; it is used by both state and nonstate actors to develop informal spaces that accommodate unfulfilled needs of those living and working in the city. The master-planned city offers a clear template of formal urban design and development within which encroaching spaces and informal processes could be clearly articulated.

Master Plans and Encroachments presents a contemporary history of the comprehensively planned city of Islamabad from the perspective of spaces that were not part of its initial master plan but that play an integral role in its everyday functioning and long-term development. Informal spaces like squatter settlements and vendor stalls normatively exist at the margins of architectural discourse and practice because of how they are perceived as everyday and “ordinary” spaces in contrast to the “high” architecture designed by professional architectural and planners. By looking at the development of informal spaces under the supposed “laboratory” conditions of a city planned “from scratch,” we may learn more about how spatial nonconformity contributes to urban development and many other kinds of urban settings as well..

This book unsettles negative assumptions associated with the breaking of planning rules. It shows how the only way marginalized communities often gain access to space is building informally and how encroaching spaces that may be labeled or perceived as illegal infringements are in fact built with official permission. Moreover, encroachments that break the law can also shape plans and regulations by introducing changes they have already addressed in advance. Far from being marginal, dysfunctional phenomena, encroachments embody a strategic and flexible use of space and resources within rigid planning systems.

The visual disparity between the living conditions of the privileged and the underprivileged residents—whose homes were in close spatial proximity—was and still is too powerful for me to ignore.



John D. Landis

A BETTER WAY TO MEASURE POVERTY

The following excerpt is from the Penn IUR December 2023 working paper, “Calculating and Applying the Tract-Based Concentrated Poverty Index,” by Faculty Fellow John D. Landis. It demonstrates the use of a Gini coefficient-like measurable to reliably track concentrated poverty at the local level and to compare its incidence by race and ethnicity.

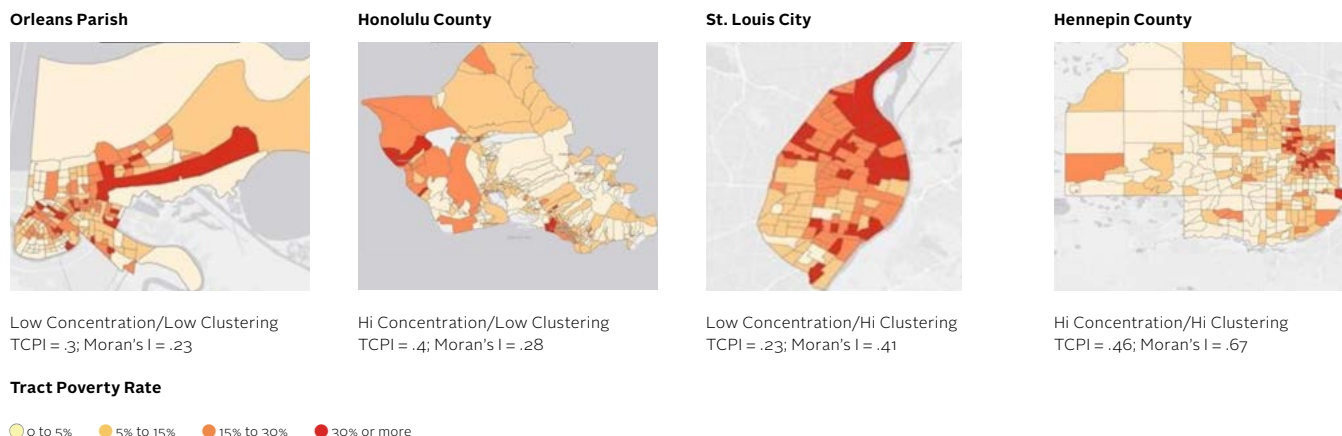
Urban sociologists, economists, and community development scholars write convincingly about the dangers of concentrated poverty, especially in cities. Concentrated poverty prevents local labor and housing markets from functioning efficiently or equitably (Wilson 1987, O’Regan 1993, Rosenbaum 1995, Goetz 2000, Galster et al. 2006, McClure 2008, Quigley et al. 2008); contributes to worsening residential segregation (Massey 1990, Jargowsky 1997, Lichter et al. 2012, Quillian 2012); aggravates crime and other social pathologies (Lee 2000, Hipp & Yates 2011, Chamberlain & Hipp 2015); limits equitable access to education, public and health services (Orfield & Lee 2005, Roscigno et al. 2006, Sims et al. 2008, Sampson et al. 2008, Ludwig et al. 2012, Gennetian et al. 2013, Gaskin et al. 2014); mitigates against community engagement in governance (Alex-Assensoh 1997, Stoll 2001, Joassart-Marcelli et al. 2005, Silver & Messerri 2014); and perhaps most perniciously of all, functions to replicate itself over multiple generations (Pebbley & Sastry 2003, Sharkey 2008, Chetty & Hendren 2018, Levy 2019). After declining nationwide during the 1990s (Jargowsky 2003, Galster 2005), the incidence

of concentrated poverty began rising in the mid-2000s as well as extending outward from cities to suburbs (Kneebone & Nadeau 2015, Iceland & Hernandez 2017).

Unfortunately, neither of the indicators used most often to measure poverty fully communicates both its incidence and magnitude. The first of the two, the poverty rate, measures the share of a local population with an income below the federal poverty line. It works well for city and county-level comparisons but is more problematic at the neighborhood level, where it fails to account for population size. A second measure, the share of the overall poverty population living in a particular district or neighborhood, is likewise more useful for comparing relative magnitudes than for communicating numerical levels.

What is needed is something like the Gini coefficient, which summarizes the degree to which a given share of income or wealth is held by a similar or lesser proportion of the population. Created by Italian statistician Corrado Gini in 1912, the Gini coefficient’s ability to concisely communicate absolute as well as relative income and wealth

FIGURE 1: FOUR COMBINATIONS OF HIGH AND LOW POVERTY CONCENTRATIONS AND CLUSTERING



concentrations across diverse spatial units makes it popular among both scholars and policy professionals (Yitzhaki & Schechtman 2013, Mukhopadhyay & Sengupta 2021). Varying linearly between 0 (complete equality) and 1 (total inequality), the Gini coefficient is calculated by plotting the cumulative population share against the cumulative income or wealth share, and then dividing the geometric area between the resulting curve—known as the Lorenz Curve after the American economist Max Lorenz who developed it—and the 45-degree diagonal by the triangular area under the diagonal. When the share of cumulative income or wealth is comparable to the cumulative population share, the Lorenz curve runs close to the diagonal, yielding a Gini coefficient close to zero and indicative of relative income or wealth equality. When the cumulative income share is much less than the comparable population share, the Lorenz curve hews closer to axes, causing the Gini coefficient to rise, and indicating greater inequality.

As helpful as Gini coefficients are for summarizing income and wealth inequality, they cannot be easily adapted for use with poverty statistics. This is because poverty status is typically measured in nominal rather than interval terms, as when a person (or household) either possesses or lacks the minimum income required to buy a government-specified basket of goods and services.

Measured this way, people fall either above or below the poverty line; there is no in-between. When aggregated by place, the incidence of poverty is expressed as the share of persons or households (or some other group such as children) whose incomes put them below the poverty line; and shares, unfortunately, cannot be used to construct Gini coefficients.

This brief working paper presents a Gini-like poverty concentration measure known as the Tract-based Concentrated Poverty Index, or TCPI, which can be calculated using census tract-level poverty rate data from the Decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS). TCPI values reflect the share of a given population living in low-poverty versus high-poverty districts and can be interpreted like Gini coefficients, meaning that they vary in a manner indicating relative concentrations. The balance of this paper proceeds in five parts. Part I explains how TCPIs are calculated using large urban counties as units of analysis and comparison. It also compares poverty concentrations as indicated by TCPI values to poverty clustering as indicated by poverty rate Moran's I values. Part II looks at how county-level TCPI values changed between 2000 and 2021, and Part III compares TCPI values by race and ethnicity. Part IV looks at the associations between TCPI values and racialized homeownership, income, and life expectancy disparities. A concluding section, Part V, offers a summary assessment of whether TCPIs add to contemporary policy discussions around alleviating poverty and reducing poverty-related outcome disparities. The upshot of these comparisons is that TCPIs are so far more useful for comparing the incidence of poverty between places and years than they are for informing anti-poverty policies and programs. Hopefully, this will change as researchers accumulate additional experience using TCPIs and similar measures to track how anti-poverty experiments like the Universal Basic Income program are affecting poverty's local magnitude and incidence.



Eugénie Birch

William Burke-White

Mauricio Rodas

HOW WILL PHILADELPHIA FINANCE CLIMATE CHANGE?

The following is an op-ed published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on December 11, 2023, by Eugénie Birch, William Burke-White, and Mauricio Rodas. Penn IUR serves as the secretariat of the SDSN Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance.

Photo by Hollie Adams / Bloomberg.

The world has likely failed to achieve the global goal of limiting temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius. As nations have reported their efforts to limit greenhouse gas and to adapt to the effects of global warming, they have largely neglected to take cities into account, despite the fact that cities are responsible for 70% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and are home to more than half of the world's population.

But a bit of good news is emerging from COP28, the U.N. climate conference in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. This glaring neglect of cities is on course to be remedied thanks to the work of such important mayoral advocacy groups as C-40, of which Philadelphia is a founding member, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and business groups including the Sustainable Markets Initiative, a coalition of major insurance companies.

One notable development is the launch of a new effort to support multilevel partnerships to address climate change that brings together national, regional, and local governments. The Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships encompasses

over 60 nations' commitments to a new reporting process that will account, for the first time, for cities' contributions to climate adaptation and mitigation.

Second is a recognition of the scale of funding required to facilitate cities' climate action and the first steps to bringing much-needed resources to local-level programs. The Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance—a coalition of more than 80 public and private finance institutions, governments, and research groups—announced its recent findings that across the globe, cities will need \$5.4 trillion annually through 2030 to adapt to changing climate realities. Yet today they are receiving only 1% of those funds.

Philadelphia offers a telling example. The city has recognized the local impact of climate change and is developing integrated strategies and programs to adapt.

The 2021 “Philadelphia Climate Action Playbook” offers a series of plans to “reduce carbon pollution” and “prepare Philadelphia for a hotter, wetter future.” Building on this plan, city departments

and utilities have developed their own guidance and programs. The Philadelphia Water Department's 2022 "Climate-Resilient Planning and Design Guidance" finds that "climate impacts pose significant challenges to maintaining our core services" and offers guidance to ensure the long-term viability of the city's water systems.

The Philadelphia Energy Authority's Solarize Philly program helps Philadelphians reduce their dependence on fossil fuels by installing affordable solar energy. Parks and Recreation's 2023 Philly Tree Plan offers a program to reinvigorate the city's urban forest, which can help alleviate the extreme heat brought on by climate change.

These programs are a good start but represent just a small fraction of the investments needed.

The Pennsylvania climate cost study released earlier this year by the Center for Climate Integrity estimated the cost of climate adaptation for Philadelphia at \$3.3 billion through 2040, or close to \$200 million per year. Philadelphia's 2023 budget is \$5.8 billion. Put another way, the cost of climate adaptation over the next 17 years will require more than half the city's entire revenue per year.

City revenues—even with state and federal financial support—cannot possibly finance needed investments.

How can cities like Philadelphia marshal needed resources? We, at the University of Pennsylvania, serve as the secretariat of a new global commission convened by Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and Rio de Janeiro Mayor Eduardo Paes that seeks to raise the importance of urban investment and offer concrete recommendations to direct more resources to cities.

Of particular note for Philadelphia is the commission's work to enhance funding for cities through new and expanded financing mechanisms. For example, the United States has an active green bond market that can make capital available at lower costs for climate-friendly initiatives.

But at under a trillion dollars, this market is a small fraction of the \$133 trillion global bond market, and inadequate to the scale of financing needed.

Philadelphia entities like the Philadelphia Energy Authority, the Board of Education, and Comcast have been active in using green bonds, but an expanded and more systematic approach is needed.

Subsidies and tax incentives provided through the federal government offer another promising avenue. Philadelphia should take a more focused look at the funds and opportunities in the Biden administration's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and other climate-focused federal legislation, which collectively offer the most significant financial commitment to climate change in U.S. history.

Drawing on these funds and incentives, Philadelphia will need to develop blended finance approaches that bring together public and private climate financing to help our community adapt to ever-growing climate risks.

The 2021 "Philadelphia Climate Action Playbook" offers a series of plans to "reduce carbon pollution" and "prepare Philadelphia for a hotter, wetter future." Building on this plan, city departments and utilities have developed their own guidance and programs.



Arthur Acolin

Desen Lin

Susan M. Wachter

WHY YOUNG ADULTS INCREASINGLY LIVE WITH THEIR PARENTS

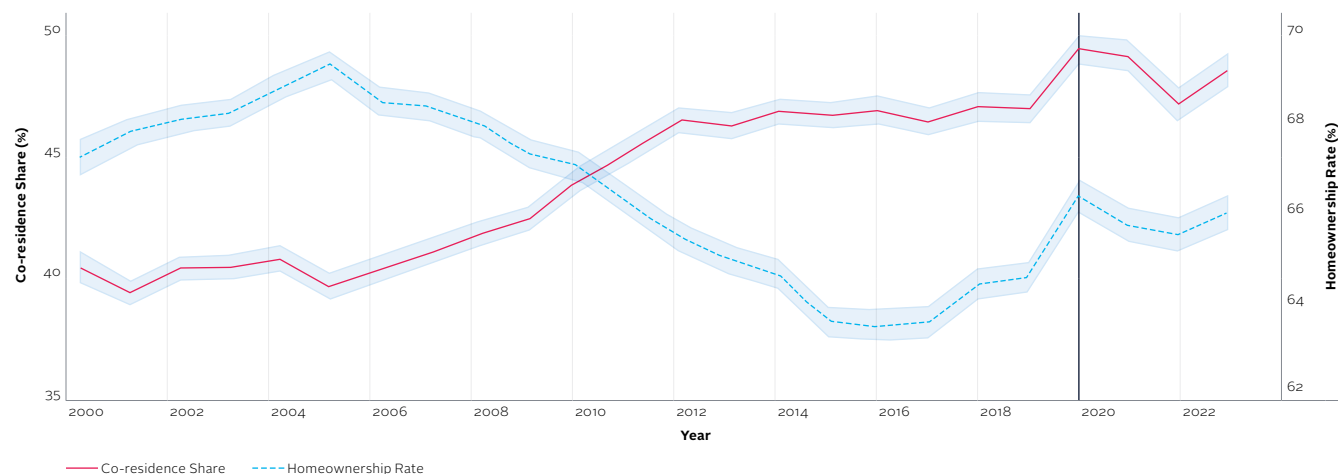
Authors Arthur Acolin and Susan Wachter find changes in market-level housing affordability are associated with the increase in young adults coresiding over the first two decades of the 21st century. Originally presented in [Real Estate Economics](#).

Photo by ironypoisoning, via Flickr.

As of 2023, 48% of young adults (age 18–29) lived with their parents, compared to 40% in 2000 and 27% in 1960. What accounts for the fact that about one quarter of young adults lived with their parents in the 1960s while today almost half do? A range of [economic and demographic factors](#) can explain the rise in the share of young adults living with their parents, including the shifts of family dynamics (number of children per family, age at marriage and first children) and the changes in educational environments (share of young adults pursuing higher education, cost of college tuition and rise in student debt). Some of these factors make it more desirable for young adults to continue living with their parents, while others make it harder for them to live independently.

The decline of housing affordability is a recently examined market factor that plays a crucial role to explain the increased co-residency among young adults, as we document in the study recently [published](#) in *Real Estate Economics*. The increase in young adult co-residency has accelerated since the 2000s, particularly in the aftermath of the housing boom and bust of the mid-2000s and the ensuing Great Recession. After a period of stabilization, the co-residence share increased again in the midst of the disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic (Fig. 1). This is a period marked overall by a decline in housing affordability, with the growth of median price and rent outpacing that of the income, and by the decreased access to homeownership, particularly among young adults.

FIGURE 1: ANNUAL SHARE OF YOUNG ADULTS (18–29) LIVING WITH THEIR PARENTS AND HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE WITH 95% CONFIDENCE INTERVAL, 2000–2023



Source: Analysis of Current Population Survey—Annual Social and Economic Supplements obtained from IPUMS CPS.

Looking at the metropolitan-level housing affordability, as measured by median rent or median house price relative to median household income, we find that, between 2000 and 2021, the share of young adults living with their parents increased more in less affordable markets. As of 2000, the share of young adults living with their parents was similar in the least affordable and most affordable markets (varying from 39 to 41%), but by 2021, the share of young adults had increased to 45% in the most affordable markets as measured by the rent-to-income ratio, compared to 55% in the least affordable markets, a 10-percentage-point gap.

In our analysis, we find that the decline of housing affordability is the leading market factor explaining about a quarter of the increase in the young adult co-residency with their parents in the period of 2000–2021. The impact of housing unaffordability on living arrangement became significant after 2005 and is a particularly important factor in less affordable metropolitan areas like many parts of California and other West Coast metropolitan areas (Fig. 2). This estimate controls for the differences in the likelihood of living with parents based on individual characteristics (age, education, income, etc.) and locational characteristics (census region, unemployment rate).

The increase in young adult co-residency has accelerated since the 2000s, particularly in the aftermath of the housing boom and bust of the mid-2000s and the ensuing Great Recession. After a period of stabilization, the co-residence share increased again in the midst of the disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic.

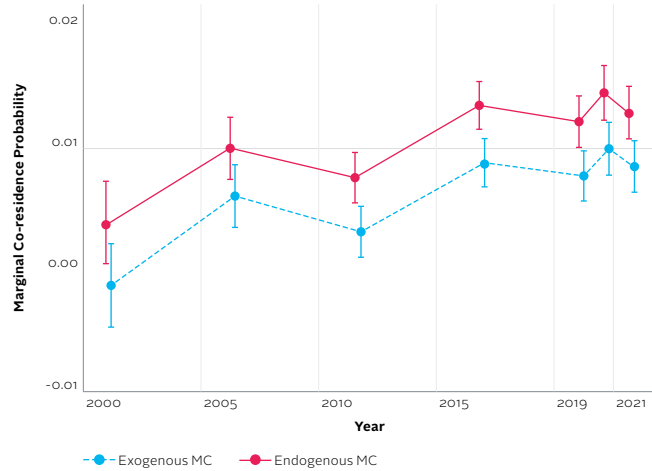


There are hopefully some positive aspects coming from more young adults living with their parents in terms of the pooling of resources and shared experience. When it comes to housing markets, the trend may lead to changes in the demand for floorplans that best accommodate multi-generational living, such as detached or attached accessory dwelling units.

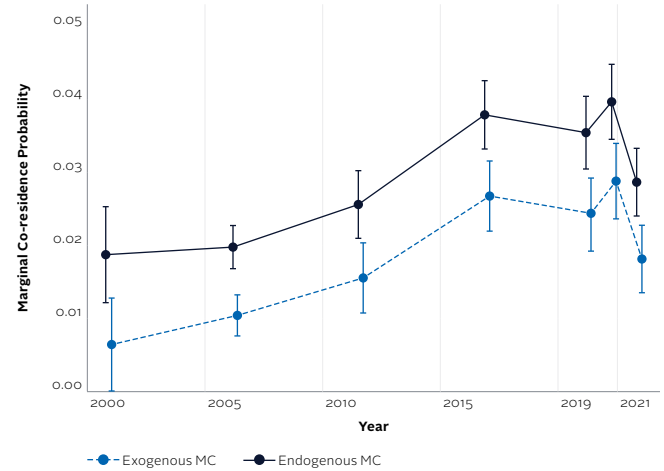
The increase in rents and house prices observed in the period of 2020–2022, coupled with the rise in interest rates since 2022, has compounded challenges for young adults seeking to rent or to qualify for a mortgage for home purchase. The role of housing affordability in explaining why young adults continue to live in the parent home is therefore expected to perdure as long as affordability does not meaningfully improve. There are hopefully some positive aspects coming from more young adults living with their parents in terms of the pooling of resources and shared experience. When it comes to housing markets, the trend may lead to changes in the demand for floorplans that best accommodate multi-generational living, such as detached or attached accessory dwelling units. In addition, it may inspire new approaches to rental or mortgage qualification, tailored to accommodate family structures with multiple generations contributing to the household income.

FIGURE 2: IMPACT OF AFFORDABILITY RATIOS ON THE LIKELIHOOD OF YOUNG ADULTS (18–29) LIVING WITH THEIR PARENTS OVER TIME AND ACROSS QUINTILES OF AFFORDABILITY RATIOS

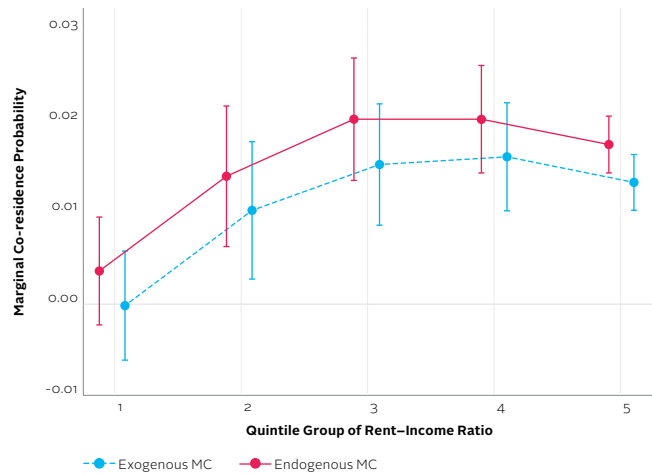
Rent–Income Model: Marginal Co-residence Probability of Rent–Income Ratio (%) with 95% CI



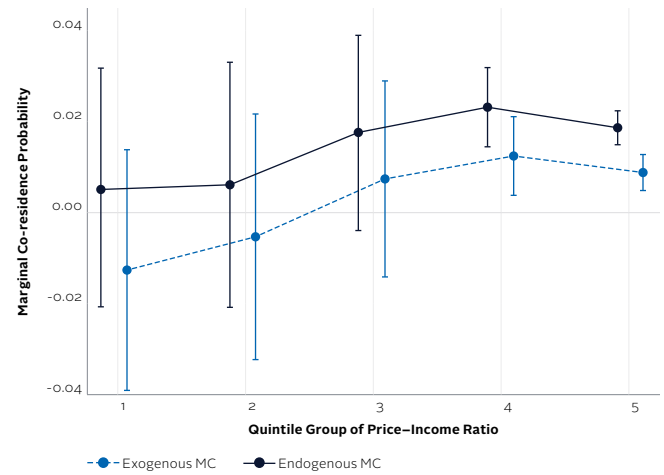
Price–Income Model: Marginal Co-residence Probability of Price–Income Ratio (%) with 95% CI



Marginal Co-residence Probability of Rent–Income Ratio by Quintile Group of Rent–Income Ratio with 95% CI



Marginal Co-residence Probability of Price–Income Ratio by Quintile Group of Price–Income Ratio with 95% CI





Eugénie Birch

James Kwame Mensah

EXPLORING ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY IN ACCRA'S INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

In a policy digest published by the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy in September 2023, Penn IUR Co-Director Eugénie Birch and Penn IUR Fellow James Kwame Mensah explore efforts to introduce renewable energy to informal settlements in Accra, Ghana. It builds on previous studies, *Powering the Slum: Meeting SDG 7 in Accra's Informal Settlements* and *"Electricity and Informal Settlements: Towards Achieving SDG 7 in Developing Countries."*

Major cities in the Global South are struggling to provide their residents with energy as they seek to implement Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7: "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all" (United Nations 2023). They have a particularly hard challenge in providing electricity legally in informal settlements that now house a billion people and are projected to triple by 2050 (Mahabir et al. 2016, McCauley et al. 2019). Further, with the International Energy Agency (IEA) projecting an increase of 30 percent in global energy demand by 2040 and fossil fuels becoming less attractive for their high Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, they realize that renewable energy may well be part of the solution.

Renewables not only have the potential to supply the required energy but also can help implement other SDGs and the Paris Agreement, contribute to a green post-COVID-19 recovery, and offset the oil shortages due to the Russia–Ukraine war (Westphal

et al. 2017). In fact, the African Development Bank (AfD) argues that renewable energy is "quick-win, wide-impact work" and "a strategic area of intervention" that underpins other critical leapfrog technologies that advance sustainable development (Bajpai et al. 2022). Despite its promise, instituting renewable energy in informal settlements is at an incipient stage.

This policy digest explores efforts to introduce renewable energy in the informal settlements in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) in Ghana. It builds on previous studies, *Powering the Slum: Meeting SDG 7 in Accra's Informal Settlements* and *"Electricity and Informal Settlements: Towards Achieving SDG 7 in Developing Countries"* (Mensah and Birch 2021, Mensah 2022). It provides examples of different applications. It outlines the challenges associated with them. Finally, it concludes with recommendations for advancing alternative energy in informal settlements. ...

RECOMMENDATIONS

Transitioning to broader use of alternative energy in informal settlements involves a coordinated multi-stakeholder approach encompassing six basic steps to be undertaken systematically over time.

EXTEND GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT

Whereas alternative energy sources have promise, all levels of government, acting within their constitutional functions, need to develop a sustained program to provide the necessary technical and financial support to informal settlements to transition to alternative energy sources such as solar, biogas, and waste-to-energy.

DEVELOP FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS

As part of an alternative energy program, energize financial support from NGOs, foreign assistance, the private sector through PPPs and locally. For example, at the local level, such savings groups as the Ghana Federation of Urban Poor (GHAFUP) that are active in slum upgrading initiatives have assets to deploy.

CREATE AWARENESS FOR THE PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Educate the public, especially informal settlement residents, on the benefits of renewable energy. Education will, in the medium to long term, help informal settlement dwellers start to integrate alternative sources of energy technologies into their energy mix. Policymakers, government officials, and NGOs should also understand the significance of alternative energy sources for informal settlement dwellers.

REMOVE TARIFFS AND IMPORT DUTIES

In the Global South, most equipment for alternative energy sources is imported, which attracts tariffs and import duties. It is imperative to reduce or eliminate the tariffs and import duties on renewable energy equipment to stimulate investment and motivate people to acquire them.

PRIORITIZE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Since extending the electricity grid to informal settlements is challenging due to the crowded nature of the place, government and energy providers should prioritize alternative sources of energy for these groups. This is important because the cost of these alternatives may be lower than traditional energy systems like dams.

Similarly, traditional energy sources lead to the emission of greenhouse gases compared to alternatives like solar and biogas.

OFFER TRAINING

Training on alternative energy systems is an important strategy that will help scale up the use of alternative energy sources in informal settlements. It will not only help provide jobs for community members and local people, but also decrease the reliance on expensive foreign personnel. It is, therefore, imperative to train community members on the use, installation, repair, and maintenance of alternative energy systems.



Richard Voith

Susan M. Wachter

David Stanek

Hyojin Lee

WORK FROM HOME AND THE CHALLENGES FACING AMERICA'S BIG CITIES

"Doom Loop or Boom Loop: Work from Home and the Challenges Facing America's Big Cities," examines the possible paths for five U.S. cities facing the "Doom Loop" scenario of vacant offices and declining economic activities. The May 2024 report was co-authored by Penn IUR and Volcker Alliance researchers David Stanek, Richard Voith, Susan Wachter, and Hyojin Lee.

Photo by Getty Images.

Ever since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in the U.S. in 2020 led to a surge in people working from home (WFH), cities across the country have been forced to reckon with the possibility of a "Doom Loop" scenario of vacant offices, depleted central business districts, declining economic competitiveness, and fiscal stress. However, given the right set of policies, cities can reverse their fortunes and embark upon a path to a "Boom Loop" of greater productivity and economic growth.

In this paper we examine the possible paths ahead for New York and four other large, geographically, and economically diverse cities: Chicago, Miami, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. The WFH share of the workforce in New York, the nation's most populous city, jumped from 4.8 percent in 2019, the year before the arrival of the pandemic in the U.S., to 16.2 percent in 2022 as COVID was subsiding. This increase reshaped the economic landscape of New York and resulted in declining in-person business activities that affected sectors including housing, commercial real estate, labor, and transportation.

As activities in the urban core have shrunk, so might returns from urban agglomeration—the geographical collocation of employees and companies that generate productivity benefits for these firms. If New York were to be affected by such a Doom Loop, the estimated direct loss in economic returns from urban agglomeration could amount to \$17.2 billion annually. While such a loss would not itself be that large relative to the city's 2022 gross domestic product (GDP) of \$1.2 trillion, the additional indirect fiscal losses could be significant if people and firms continue to choose lower-cost locations outside New York's tax boundaries in response to the declining urban productivity advantages. Agglomeration declines can spur responses in which budget shortfalls lead to shrinking public services and higher taxes, which in turn lead to cycles of decline like those that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s in many U.S. cities.

By contrast, remote work presents opportunities for New York and other cities to enter a Boom Loop. As the pace of technological change accelerates,

cities like New York could realize significant gains by leveraging the lower costs of WFH for some tasks, intensifying the innovation of in-person work, and increasing spheres of influence via both WFH and modernized transportation networks that enable easier physical access. This opportunity is only likely to grow with the explosion in generative artificial intelligence.

This analysis concludes with specific policy recommendations for avoiding Doom Loop outcomes in New York, along with analyses of the impact of WFH in the four other cities listed above. We argue that New York City should consider the following policies to navigate challenges and opportunities associated with WFH. Many of these recommendations apply to other cities as well. The policies include:

- Promoting the city as the home of innovation-generating sectors that traditionally benefit from in-person interaction;
- Leveraging the employment of remote workers for tasks that do not require physical presence or agglomeration, thus optimizing operational efficiency and lowering both commuting and real estate costs;
- Ensuring that the municipal tax system encourages in-person work;
- Adapting public and private infrastructure, including mass transit, to thrive in an environment that increasingly requires flexibility;
- Building more amenities to attract residents; and
- Lowering the price of housing by increasing allowable density under zoning regulations and reducing production costs (including construction and regulatory costs) and the time required for permits and land-use reviews.

As the pace of technological change accelerates, cities like New York could realize significant gains by leveraging the lower costs of working from home for some tasks, intensifying the innovation of in-person work, and increasing spheres of influence via both WFH and modernized transportation networks that enable easier physical access.



Meagan Ehlenz

PROVIDING LASTING AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP THROUGH SHARED EQUITY MODELS

The following excerpt is from the paper “The Challenge of Affordable Housing: Shared Equity as a Way Forward,” by Penn IUR Scholar Meagan Ehlenz. It follows ideas exchanged at a roundtable on shared equity housing convened by Penn IUR and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy the previous year.

Photo © Google Maps.

AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS: SUPPLY, DEMAND, AND GAPS

The genesis for the roundtable rests in existing housing conditions, characterized by escalating housing costs and pressing demands for greater access to affordable housing across the U.S. It is widely accepted that the U.S. is facing an affordable housing crisis (National Low Income Housing Coalition 2023; Joint Center for Housing Studies 2023). This is true in the private housing sector, where speculative investors are increasingly crowding out homeowners in the single-family market and rents are rapidly appreciating. Critically, traditional affordable housing supplies via federally subsidized programs are also facing unmet demand and threats to supply. Approximately five million rental units are supported by federally funded, project-based housing programs, accounting for approximately 10 percent of the rental stock

across the U.S. (Aurand et al. 2021). Within this landscape, the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program (LIHTC) contributes nearly half of all federally supported affordable housing supplies (Aurand et al. 2021).

LIHTC projects are required to adhere to a 30-year affordability standard that ensures affordable rents for households earning, typically, between 30 percent and 60 percent of area median incomes (AMI) (Freddie Mac 2022). Since program inception in 1987, more than 40,000 projects have been produced via the LIHTC program, accounting for approximately 3 million units. According to studies by the NLIHC and the Public and Affordable Housing Research Corporation (PAHRC), nearly 750,000 federally assisted rental homes, across all program, are scheduled to lose their affordability restrictions by 2030, with LIHTC properties contributing the highest potential losses (Aurand et al. 2021)...

THE POTENTIAL FOR SHARED EQUITY MODELS TO RESPOND TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING CHALLENGES

The tandem supply and demand pressures in housing markets have generated steep challenges for households seeking affordable housing options. The federal response to affordable housing has also reached a critical juncture, wherein existing LIHTC supplies—the largest contributor to federally supported affordable housing—are facing substantial losses over the next two decades and incoming units are falling short of a 1:1 replacement rate.

The contours of current housing needs and pressures call for innovative solutions. As an umbrella, SEH models offer a framework for addressing affordable housing challenges in lasting ways. This suite of mission-driven housing can provide several key advantages over existing affordable housing responses, including (but not limited to):

- SEH programs are intended to provide permanently affordable housing, free of any time-limited affordability clauses. SEH housing inventories are intentionally designed to protect affordability for not just the initial, but also subsequent, generations of households in the unit.
- SEH programs proactively remove properties from the speculative market, establishing a durable supply of affordable housing units that (1) remains intact relative to market appreciation, even in the face of gentrification and (2) is sustained over time through nonprofit stewardship of properties.
- SEH programs can provide access to wealth creation (often via homeownership). Unlike affordable rental programs, many SEH-based strategies focus on subsidizing affordable homeownership programs. For instance, CLTs enable lower-income households, who often are unable to achieve market-rate homeownership due to prohibitively high down payments and purchase prices, to attain homeownership. As the primary vehicle for wealth creation in the U.S., this stepping stone into homeownership becomes a critical asset for the household both now and in the future. In other cases, SEH programs seek to provide stabilized, affordable rents that enable households to redirect their incomes to other needs.

THREE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SHARED EQUITY MODELS

Broadly, SEH models leverage two primary strategies aimed to generate affordable housing (Ehlenz and Taylor 2019). First, they deploy long-term subsidy retention strategies to embed affordable housing resources into their properties for the foreseeable future, ensuring the benefits (1) last beyond the first buyer (by linking the subsidy to the property itself, inhibiting the first homeowner from effectively becoming the sole beneficiary when they, subsequently, sell the home at market rate), and (2) extend past the lifespan of conventional affordable housing subsidies (e.g., LIHTC or Section 8 subsidies that are generally sustained for 15–30 years).

Second, they utilize resale formulas for owner-occupied properties, placing constraints upon the share of market-based appreciation a homeowner can realize upon resale of their home. In short, an SEH homeowner would expect to realize equity and modest appreciation gains when selling their home but would not recoup the full extent of market appreciation. This important feature enables the subsequent buyer to also benefit from below-market pricing. Based on the 2022 survey of U.S.-based CLTs, approximately half of CLTs utilize an appraisal-based formula to determine resale price, with three-quarters of CLTs reporting that homeowners are eligible to claim 25 percent of market appreciation (Wang et al. 2023). Approximately one-third of CLTs rely on a fixed-rate formula and one-fifth use an indexed-based formula to determine resale prices and the homeowner's share of appreciation.

Lastly, the principles of lasting affordability are typically enforced by ground leases, deed restrictions, or some combination of both (61 percent, 8 percent, and 17 percent, respectively) (Wang et al. 2023).

CLTs are the most common form of SEH; other forms of SEH include limited-equity cooperatives and deed-restricted houses and condominiums, and resident-owned manufactured housing communities with permanent affordability covenants extending 30+ years (Davis 2017; NeighborWorks America 2021).



Bruce O'Neill

DEVELOPMENTS BELOW THE CITY'S DEPTHS

Underground: Dreams and Degradations in Bucharest moves beneath Romania's capital to examine how the demands of global accumulation have extended urban life not just upward and outward but also downward beneath city sidewalks. The following excerpt previews how Bruce O'Neill sees the underground as foundational to the forming of the global middle class. For the full text and references, visit pennpress.org.

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Photo: istock.com/
CatEyePerspective

As the demands of global capital accumulation drive the cost of real estate to a premium, the kind of person going underground has changed from down and out to middle class. Additionally, the frequency of their trips underground has increased, and the range of what they do down there has expanded. To this end, a range of cities around the world have invested incredible sums of money to excavate, refurbish, and expand their undergrounds for the sake of their futures. *Underground* shows how these efforts have not only introduced new strata but also new aesthetics of inequality that are fundamentally shaping where and how the middle classes fit in the city.

City planners have long imagined that the cities of the future would grow downward. In 1910, for example, the Paris planner Eugène Hénard called for the development of underground roads and railways beneath the city's street level to "serve as a conduit for all the pipe systems, the removal of house refuse, and the transport of heavy materials and goods." Writing from Philadelphia just a few years later,

George Webster not only agreed with Hénard but also pushed the underground's potential further: "In the growth of a modern city, the number and character of underground structures are constantly increasing and changing, and it is probable that the future will see the present one supplemented by others now scarcely thought of." The need for a municipal body with absolute power to regulate subsurface structures seemed obvious enough to Webster; and yet, he added, "little thought has been given to the urban underground."

But the advent of airplanes and skyscrapers quickly fixed the attention of [planners] and state regulators upward. "The maxim *cujus est solum, efus est usque ad coelum* [whoever's is the soil, it is theirs all the way to Heaven and all the way to Hell] has had a long and honorable history," Laird Bell wrote in the *Illinois Law Review* in 1928. But in an era of prolific upward construction, Bell foresaw the end of this paradigm of property rights. While grounded in legal precedent, the maximum coordinates—an earth fixed to a heaven above and a hell below—



implied a flat rather than round earth. Moreover, modern advances in construction and travel had, in Bell's terms, thrown "the nature and extent of the rights of the owners of the soil projected upward" into question. The economic potential of upward growth, particularly above the railroad tracks cutting through the valuable downtowns of the likes of Chicago and New York, appeared clear enough to developers. Legal instruments for discerning "air rights"— and speculative markets on which to buy and sell them—quickly emerged to regulate the upward growth of these and other bustling metropolises worldwide.

With imaginations gripped by the aesthetic wonders of the city's towering skyline, its downward development went startlingly unregulated, straight through to the present. Master plans that meticulously coordinate the use of space from the city surface upward do not incorporate the urban underground. As one group of London-based architects noted, "We analyzed the [U.K.] planning laws and realized that they cover everything about the surface of the ground but nothing beneath it. There was nothing whatsoever that could stop us from drilling all the way down to the south pole." As land developers eager to maximize the value of their projects mine ever deeper underground, plans that imagine the underground as an empty repository ready to absorb the needs of development confront shifting geologies, networks of incomprehensibly mapped utility lines and sewer canals, as well as the remnants of walls, foundations, passageways, and other legally protected heritage of the forgotten past. Once completed, these uncoordinated underground installations are especially costly to remove, creating obstructions that complicate any future efforts to systematically plan the city's immediate subsurface. The obvious workaround, of course, is to drive future urban developments downward even deeper, beneath the detritus of the shallower layers...

To put it simply, municipal and market actors in some of the world's most dynamic and global oriented cities are not investing billions to develop and expand the urban underground to stash the down and out. Instead—as others have detailed so thoroughly, at times invoking the underground as metaphor—processes of gentrification have pushed the very poor entirely out of the centers of wealth and privilege in order to make room for the middle classes. With their critical focus trained on the work of walls and gates in excluding the very poor, scholars have not paid much attention to the way floors and ceilings divide those within the city...

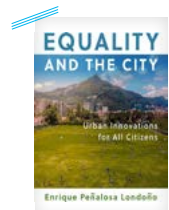
In a moment of spiraling global inequality that has cleared outward signs of poverty away from the densely developed centers of wealth and privilege, the novel perspective of the underground brings into focus how upstairs–downstairs dynamics increasingly characterize the experience of those who remain within the city.

With their critical focus trained on the work of walls and gates in excluding the very poor, scholars have not paid much attention to the way floors and ceilings divide those within the city.



Enrique Peñalosa Londoño

DESIGNING CITIES FOR HUMAN HAPPINESS, DIGNITY, AND EQUALITY



The following excerpt from *Equality and the City: Urban Innovations for All Citizens*, by Enrique Peñalosa Londoño, was published in April 2024 as part of *The City in the 21st Century Series*. As mayor of Bogotá, Peñalosa Londoño initiated development of one of the largest and most comprehensive public transit systems in the Global South, and created or improved a thousand public parks. Here he presents a compelling image of how cities should be—sustainable and accessible to all. For the full text, visit pennpress.org.

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In the 1970s it became increasingly clear that communist countries were lagging behind capitalist ones, as illustrated by the comparison of East Germany to West Germany. Reluctantly I came to accept that private ownership and the market were the best ways to manage most of society's resources in order to achieve high economic growth. Unfortunately, that entailed an indefinite persistence of inequality, which was still unacceptable to me.

Then, suddenly, I discovered the city. While I was at university, my father was appointed secretary general of the United Nations Habitat I Conference, held in Vancouver in 1976. A whole new world opened up to me as a result of my father's experience there. At the time, Latin American cities' population was growing at an astonishing rate—Bogotá at 4.3 percent a year, which meant that it doubled in seventeen years. My father often sent me documents and occasionally even let me draft his speeches. I was fascinated to discover the

importance of cities in the creation of equality and the possibilities of making them different and better.

Gradually, I became more interested in cities than in socialism. I believed economic development would arrive in Colombia anyway, sooner or later: it might take fifty years, more or less, but it would come. However, if cities were not designed well, the damage would be irreparable. For example, if ten hectares (about twenty-five acres) could be set aside for a park, then millions of people would enjoy it for hundreds of years. But if those ten hectares were covered with buildings, it would be almost impossible to demolish them to make a park there later.

The cities I had in mind were Colombian—Bogotá in particular. I was born in Washington, D.C., and had lived in the United States for the last three years of high school and my four years at university. Although I enjoyed my experience enormously, I never considered spending my life there. At the time, I was not interested in what had to be done

What bothered citizens more than the existence of megabillionaires or the concentration of income and lack of desired social services was the feeling of being excluded and belittled.

to be elected to public office in Colombia, but deep down, I had a feeling that I would want to run for office. And the fact I was born in the United States and had that nationality could be an electoral disadvantage. During a trip to Colombia halfway through my studies at Duke, I went with my father to see the American ambassador and told him I wanted to surrender my nationality. He was astounded. “Just look out of that window, take a look at that queue two blocks long of people waiting to get a visa! They would give an arm and a leg to have what you want to give up. Why don’t you go home, think a bit, and if you want to, come back in a few days’ time.” So I went home, I thought about it, and a week later returned to the embassy and formally renounced my U.S. nationality...

...With the savings from ten months of construction work, I set out with a friend, intending to follow the Silk Road from Turkey to Iran and Afghanistan and through to China. The first stop was London, where we had our initial taste of the wonders of the great cities of Europe, and when we arrived in Paris, I was dazzled—ecstatic about the city’s beauty....I lived an austere student life, for a while sharing a room so small that when the two narrow cots were unfolded, there was no room to walk around them...

...It was only many years later, however, that I realized I had been poor in Paris because while I was living there, I missed nothing. I had Paris! It was totally different from the beautiful but antiseptic Duke University campus, from the Washington suburb where I had lived while in high school, or from the Bogotá of my childhood, which lacked so much. Paris was a fresh delight every day. It generated happiness and equality: I shared the sidewalks, public transport, and parks with people from all walks of life, as well as the beauty of the architecture, the river, the museums, and free cultural activities. I experienced what I had intuitively believed since I’d become disillusioned with socialism: the city could be more effective than communism in building equality and more powerful than economic development in building happiness...

Happiness is difficult to define and impossible to measure, yet it is the only thing that truly matters...Happiness is closely related to the realization of human potential. An obstacle to achieving happiness, I would add, is feeling inferior or excluded. What I focus on in this book is the inequality that causes unhappiness and the ways to resolve it... Where there is legitimacy, individuals feel they are members of a community of equals. Where there is legitimacy, individuals play by the rules, report those who break them, and even demand punishment for them; individuals don’t evade taxes or litter the street, and they walk their dog with a plastic bag in hand. Individuals join civic initiatives and government plans. Legitimacy is the mortar that binds the edifice of organized society.

Visible inequality and exclusion such as that caused by conspicuous and extravagant consumption—mansions reminiscent of the palaces of the nobility that sparked the French Revolution, enormous fuel-guzzling yachts, private beaches, and exclusive clubs—gnaw at legitimacy. The state loses its moral authority. When there is no legitimacy, citizens evade the rules and populist leaders prosper. If they get power, they not only harm the market economy but also democracy...

...My impression...is that what bothered citizens more than the existence of megabillionaires or the concentration of income and lack of desired social services was the feeling of being excluded and belittled by the establishment... In this book, I propose that beyond income equality, there are other powerful forms of equality, many of which a good city can construct.



Eugénie Birch

Laura Frances

Delfina Vildosa

KEY MESSAGES FOR URBAN CLIMATE FINANCE

The Secretariat of the SDSN Global Commission for Urban SDG Finance prepared a briefing paper for the scoping session for the [International Panel on Climate Change's \(IPCC\) Special Report on Cities](#) to be published in 2027. As the only special report for the seventh IPCC cycle, this report will have five chapters documenting cities in the context of climate change, challenges faced by cities due to global warming, urban approaches to mitigation and adaptation, and how to facilitate positive outcomes, including creating the enabling environment to support needed finance for urban climate-responsive policies and programs according to different types and capacities of cities. This summary encompasses key messages and their documentation as contributed. This forms the basis of the Commission's continued supportive efforts to be given to the Special Report on Cities authors over the next few months.

Urban climate finance demand is growing as nations fail to meet climate goals. International organizations and philanthropy are increasingly turning to cities to leverage their power to solve climate change, yet, urban climate finance is constrained by limited supply.

- From 2017 to 2018, cities globally received less than 10% of the annual global climate finance expenditures. “Climate finance flows for cities reached an estimated USD 384 billion annually on average in 2017/2018, far short of urban climate finance needs, estimated to stand at USD 4.5 to 5.4 trillion annually.” ([CCFLA, 2021](#)).
- “Given the constant failures at reaching a multilateral climate agreement among national leaders, international organizations and global philanthropy are increasingly turning their attention to cities and city models as a new way to intervene in

global climate change...This has made international development organizations and foundations increasingly interested in cities and urban planning as a key arena to promote the new 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.” ([Montero, S. 2020](#)).

[...] The public sector does not have sufficient resources to meet the financial needs of urban climate finance alone. Persistent legal, governance, and market constraints restrict MBDs from offering comprehensive financing for climate solutions directly to cities.

- “The cost of achieving urban resilience across the world dwarfs available public finance, however, from both development banks and governments themselves. Meanwhile, vast amounts of money on capital markets are searching for profitable investment opportunities.” ([Bigger & Webber, 2020](#); [Keenan, Chu, & Peterson, 2019](#); [White & Wahba, 2019](#)).

- Structural constraints create a national versus subnational “governance context in which cities are reliant upon external actors—including non-state, private, and multilateral agents—to support general development functions.” (Keenan, Chu, & Peterson, 2019).
- Only 2% of MBD urban climate-related finance is directed through non-sovereign operations, despite cities often facing bureaucratic hurdles and political differences with national governments. (CCFLA, 2021).
- “Notably, some climate funds are only permitted to provide funding to national governments, while others can only offer loans with a sovereign guarantee. The legal definitions of which organizations are eligible to receive climate finance might be the first, insurmountable barrier for local organizations, such that the others are ultimately irrelevant.” (Colenbrander et al., 2017).

[...] Assessment of the level and sources of urban climate finance is emerging but the general state of knowledge is limited partially due to insufficient data. Existing research has increasingly identified synergies, trade-offs, and uneven investment patterns in the Global North and Global South between urban climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. There is a gap in our knowledge of the extent to which urban climate change mitigation efforts affect the adoption of adaptation policies, and how economic and ecological systems are connected to socio-technical transitions. (Lee et al. 2020; Bracking & Leffel, 2021). More research on underwriting and risk assessment of specific urban climate projects or sectors will support enhanced climate finance. “There is growing recognition of the importance of funding and financing arrangements to enable climate change adaptation in cities. However, there has been little critical analysis into the underwriting and governance mechanisms necessary to support broader scaled application.” (Keenan, Chu, & Peterson, 2019)

- “Further progress is needed to develop robust methodologies and collect comprehensive data for evaluating the climate-related risks that companies and investors are exposed to.” Low-resolution and abridged data sets hinder comprehensive climate stress test analyses. Researchers require longitudinal data to model dynamic interactions, similar to weather modeling, between the macroeconomy, the financial systems, climate change, and environmental policies. (Campiglio et al., 2018; Hong et al., 2020).
- “Over the past decade, scholarship on urban climate adaptation has increased exponentially with many studies providing empirical cases on existing approaches, diagnosing governance deficiencies, and highlighting the justice and equity implications of proposed interventions.” (Keenan, Chu, & Peterson, 2019).
- 49% of MDBs’ tracked urban climate-related finance has been channeled through national governments—and this percentage is likely to be even larger after accounting for data gaps—exploring direct and intermediated means of financing cities can empower further climate action. (CCFLA, 2021).

“Given the constant failures at reaching a multilateral climate agreement among national leaders, international organizations and global philanthropy are increasingly turning their attention to cities and city models as a new way to intervene in global climate change.”



Left center photo by Mithail Afrige Chowdhury (Dhaka, Bangladesh); center group photo by Eric Sucar.

CONVENINGS

IN 2023–24, PENN IUR SPONSORED 27 EVENTS, INCLUDING THE MONTHLY SPECIAL BRIEFING SERIES, PENN IUR'S ONGOING PUBLIC INTEREST SERIES, AND PENN IUR BOOK TALKS. ALL RECORDED PUBLIC EVENTS ARE ARCHIVED ON THE PENN IUR [WEBSITE](#).

SPECIAL BRIEFING ON THE FISCAL OUTLOOK OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

HOW SHOULD CITIES RECOVER FROM THE FISCAL CHALLENGES BROUGHT BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

To answer this question, Penn IUR and the Volcker Alliance launched Special Briefing, a monthly panel discussion and podcast where local and state officials and experts discuss topics that are critical to the future of American cities, moderated by Penn IUR Co-Director, Susan Wachter, and William Glasgall, Volcker Alliance Senior Director, Public Finance and Penn IUR Fellow.

JULY 27, 2023

[The Future of Mass Transportation as U.S. Pandemic Aid Nears an End](#)

SPEAKERS:

Anthony Foxx, former U.S. Transportation Secretary

Kurt Forsgren, Managing Director, Sector Lead for Transportation, U.S. Public Finance, S&P Global

Frank Jimenez, Senior Fiscal Policy Analyst, California Legislative Analyst's Office

John ("Janno") Lieber, Chair and CEO, Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Leslie Richards, General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

[Recession, Soft Landing, and Impact on States and Cities](#)

SPEAKERS:

Zac Jackson, Budget Director, State of Indiana

Eric Kim, Senior Director, Fitch Ratings

Torsten Slok, Chief Economist, Apollo Global Management

Matthew Stitt, Director and National Lead for Equitable Recovery and Strategic Financial Initiatives, Management and Budget Consulting team, PFM; former CFO, Philadelphia City Council

Kate Watkins, President and Chief Economist, Bright Fox Analytics; former Chief Economist, Colorado State Legislature's Legislative Council Staff

OCTOBER 19, 2023

[Rolling Out the \\$1.2 Trillion Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act—What's Being Built and What's in the Pipeline](#)

SPEAKERS:

Representative Earl Blumenauer, D-OR

Samantha Silverberg, White House Deputy Infrastructure Implementation Coordinator

Alison Premo Black, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, American Road & Transportation Builders Association

Leah Brooks, Professor, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy, George Washington University

Jessica Jennings, Public Administration Legislative Director, Transportation and Infrastructure, National Association of Counties

Vikram Rai, Division Lead Strategist, Wells Fargo Municipal

NOVEMBER 30, 2023

[Public Pensions— Still a Crisis?](#)

SPEAKERS:

Liz Farmer, Public Finance Journalist; Co-Host, *Public Money* podcast

Vedanta Goenka, Senior Municipal Strategist, Citigroup

Merl Hackbart, Professor Emeritus, Martin School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Kentucky

Shoaib Khan, Director, New Jersey Treasury Division of Investment

Anthony Randazzo, Executive Director, Equable Institute

Les Richmond, Vice President and Actuary, Build America Mutual

JANUARY 25, 2024

[2024 Fiscal Outlook for States and Cities](#)

SPEAKERS:

Clarence Anthony, CEO and Executive Director, National League of Cities

Kim Norton, Mayor, Rochester, Minn.

Mark Ferrandino, Director, Colorado Office of State Planning and Budgeting

Eric Kim, Senior Director, Fitch Ratings

Mark Zandi, Chief Economist, Moody's Analytics

FEBRUARY 28, 2024

[State Tax Cuts](#)

SPEAKERS:

Can Chen, Associate Professor, Andrew Young School of Public Policy at Georgia State University (GSU)

Alex Hathaway, Senior Research Associate, Center for State and Local Finance at GSU

Geoffrey E. Buswick, Managing Director and Government Sector Leader, S&P Global Ratings—U.S. Public Finance

Natalie Cohen, Founder and President, National Municipal Research

“There is a lot on the plates of local leaders, but city leaders are also resilient and optimistic, and they’re determined to build their communities back better than ever before, in tandem with their state and federal partners.”

CLARENCE ANTHONY, CEO AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES

MARCH 28, 2024

[America's Hot Growth States](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

Alex Adams, Budget Director, State of Idaho

Thomas Doe, President, Municipal Market Analytics, Inc.

Torsten Slok, Chief Economist, Apollo Global Management

APRIL 25, 2024

[America's \\$900 Billion Water Crisis](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

Senator Bill Bradley, former United States Senator, D-NJ

Doug Evanson, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, San Antonio Water System

Howard Neukrug, Executive Director, The Water Center at the University of Pennsylvania

Nicole Lick, Senior Life Scientist, Water Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Atlantic Region

Reese Tisdale, President and Chief Executive Officer, Bluefield Research

MAY 29, 2024

[Doom Loop or Boom Loop—Work from Home and the Challenges Facing U.S. Cities](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

David Stanek, Vice President, Econsult Solutions Inc.

Richard Voith, Founding Principal, Econsult Solutions Inc.

Jose Maria Barrero, Assistant Professor, Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México

Stijn Van Nieuwerburgh, Professor of Real Estate, Columbia Business School

Kathryn Wylde, President and Chief Executive Officer, Partnership for New York City

[To read more on this lively discussion, see page 29.](#)

JUNE 27, 2024

[State Tax Breaks](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

Matt Fabian, Partner, Municipal Market Analytics

Lisa Washburn, Managing Director, Municipal Market Analytics

Jonathan Ball, Legislative Fiscal Analyst, State of Utah

Tim Bartik, Senior Economist, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research

Arlene Martinez, Deputy Executive Director, Good Jobs First

FORUM ON URBAN INFORMALITY

THE PENN IUR FORUM ON URBAN INFORMALITY CONVENES GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS TO EXCHANGE IDEAS ON THE TOPIC OF URBAN INFORMALITY. With a mission of bringing together early-career experts across different disciplines and institutions to explore the way informality is shaping sustainable urban development, the Forum hosts regular events with international experts on topics related to urban informality and offers student researchers the opportunity to share their work in progress for peer input and review.

SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

Uneven Access to Digital Tools and Tech in Low-Income Informal Communities

SPEAKERS:

Stefan Peter Chavez-Norgaard, PhD Candidate, Columbia University

Pamela Siphika, Founder, Whizz ICT

Christopher Moonga, Co-Director, Whizz ICT

MODERATOR:

Gwamaka Mwalemba, Senior Lecturer, Department of Information Systems, University of Cape Town

FEBRUARY 26, 2024

The Architecture of Informality in Islamabad: Book Talk and Discussion

SPEAKERS:

Faiza Moatasim, Assistant Professor of Architecture in Urbanism and Urban Design, USC School of Architecture

Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, Associate Professor of Political Economy, Quaid-i-Azam University

Liza Weinstein, Department Chair and Associate Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University

“Among urban designers and municipal officials, the term ‘encroachment’ is defined as a deviation from the official master plan. But in cities today, such informal modifications to the urban fabric are deeply enmeshed with formal planning procedures.”

FAIZA MOATASIM, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE IN URBANISM AND URBAN DESIGN, USC SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

PUBLIC INTEREST SERIES

PENN IUR HOSTS PUBLIC PROGRAMS BOTH ON CAMPUS AND ONLINE TO ENGAGE STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, AND URBAN LEADERS IN DISCUSSION ON TOPICS INCLUDING CLIMATE CHANGE, INFORMAL DEVELOPMENT, AND MORE.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

[Advancing Homeownership Opportunity: An Update of Recent Innovations](#)

SPEAKERS:

Stacey Shifman, Senior Director, Single-Family Analytics and Modeling, Fannie Mae

Chuck Bishop, Head, Home Lending Diverse Segments, Wells Fargo

Robin Wiessmann, Executive Director and CEO, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

Nicole Montecalvo, Chief Capital Officer, Home Partners of America

George W. McCarthy, President and CEO, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

MODERATORS:

Laurie Goodman, Institute Fellow, Urban Institute

Susan Wachter, Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research

CO-SPONSORS:

Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia and The Urban Institute

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

[Climate Week: Raising Public Awareness](#)

SPEAKERS:

Simon Richter, Class of 1942 Endowed Term Professor of Germanic Studies, School of Arts & Sciences

Joshua Mosley, Professor of Fine Arts, Weitzman School of Design

Kelly Kennedy, Research Coordinator and Lab Manager, Galápagos Education and Research Alliance

MODERATOR:

Eugénie L. Birch, Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research

CO-SPONSOR:

Perry World House

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

[AI in the City](#)

SPEAKERS:

John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities

Evi Fuelle, Global Policy Director, Credo AI

Santiago Garces, Chief Information Officer, City of Boston

Emily Royall, Smart Cities Administrator, Office of Innovation, City of San Antonio

Ethan Zuckerman, Associate Professor of Public Policy, Information and Communication, UMass Amherst

CO-SPONSOR:

Department of City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Celebrating Innovations in Urban Resilience at the Urban Leadership Forum

Penn IUR's Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Prize recognizes leaders who are guiding cities worldwide toward a resilient, sustainable, and equitable future.



Eugénie Birch, Andrew Melnik, Melanie Nussdorf, Penn IUR Board Member and wife of the late Lawrence Nussdorf, Lauren Sorkin, Jaime Alberto Pumarejo Heins, and Susan Wachter. Photo by Eric Sucar.

“The great miracle of the city is everybody finding common goals...If you find those common goals and you talk about those—and less about the things that divide us—people start coming together.”

JAIME ALBERTO PUMAREJO HEINS, FORMER MAYOR, CITY OF BARRANQUILLA, COLOMBIA

Winners of the 2024 award, celebrated at 19th Annual Urban Leadership Forum, included:

- **Jaime Alberto Pumarejo Heins**, former Mayor, City of Barranquilla, Colombia: Pumarejo’s tenure included reclaiming a forgotten mangrove forest, re-greening the city, implementing solar and wind-powered infrastructure, and fostering international collaborations for ambitious green infrastructure projects.
- **Andrew Melnik**, former International Projects Manager, City of Bucha, Region of Kyiv, Ukraine: Melkin has dedicated his efforts to Ukraine’s post-war reconstruction, urban development, and energy efficiency projects, attracting funding for Ukrainian municipalities from leading companies, NGOs, and funds.
- **Lauren Sorkin**, Executive Director, Resilient Cities Network: Sorkin leverages the expertise of a team of urban resilience professionals in London, Mexico City, New York, and Singapore, recognizing “the power of networks to save lives and secure a better future.”

Additionally, Penn IUR honored three undergraduate students committed to addressing urban issues post-graduation (see [page 70](#)). Penn IUR has recognized urban leaders through an annual award since 2005.

OCTOBER 5, 2023

[Data Action: Using Data for A Public Good](#)

SPEAKER:

Sarah Williams, Associate Professor of Technology and Urban Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

CO-SPONSOR:

Master of Urban Spatial Analytics

NOVEMBER 13, 2023

[Private Cities in the Developing World: Has Their Time Come?](#)

SPEAKERS:

Martin Rama, Consultant, Equitable Growth, Finance and Institutions Vice Presidency, World Bank

Yue Li, Senior Economist, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

Rana Hasan, Regional Lead Economist for South Asia, Asian Development Bank

Robert Helsley, Grosvenor Professor of Cities, Business Economics and Public Policy, Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia

FEBRUARY 1, 2024

[Post Industrial DIY: Book Talk & Panel Discussion](#)

SPEAKERS:

Daniel Campo, Associate Professor of City & Regional Planning, Morgan State University

Catherine Seavitt, Professor and Chair of Landscape Architecture

Fritz Steiner, Dean and Paley Professor, Weitzman School of Design

CO-SPONSOR:

Ian L. McHarg Center for Urbanism & Ecology

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

[Wharton-Weitzman Future of Cities](#)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Meera Joshi, Deputy Mayor for Operations, City of New York

Leah Johnson, Executive Vice President, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

Thabo Lenneiye, Managing Director, Sustainable Agriculture Fund, Kleinman Center for Energy Policy

CO-SPONSORS:

The Wharton School and the Weitzman School of Design

MARCH 13, 2024

[Powering the Slum: Exploring Alternatives Forms of Energy for Informal Settlements](#)

SPEAKERS:

James Kwame Mensah, Senior Lecturer, University of Ghana Business School

Eugénie L. Birch, Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research

CO-SPONSOR:

Kleinman Center for Energy Policy

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Vibrant Cities

How the world's developing cities can meet the climate, social, and economic challenges of tomorrow was the theme of Vibrant Cities: Advancing Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Urban Development, a Penn IUR virtual event held April 9, 2024.



"Taste of Nature" by Mithail Afrige Chowdhury (Dhaka, Bangladesh).

Cities thrive not only by increasing incomes and wealth for a select few but also by improving common welfare through the equitable provision of basic services and opportunities. To do this, tomorrow's vibrant cities must be resilient and low carbon, inclusive, and productive.

Somik Lall, Staff Director, World Bank 2024 World Development Report joined Omar Masoud, Chief Executive Officer, The Urban Unit, Government of Pakistan, Guy Michaels, Associate Professor, Economics, London School of Economics, Forhad J. Shilpi, Senior Economist, Development Economics, The World Bank, together with Gilles Duranton, Professor and Dean's Chair, Real Estate, Wharton, and Penn IUR Faculty Fellow as moderator to take on this ambitious topic.

“Often we are very quick to say densification is the only really important strategy for CO₂ reduction, but what we systematically find is that it's income growth that matters, not people per square kilometer.”

—SOMIK LALL, SENIOR ADVISER TO THE CHIEF ECONOMIST, WORLD BANK GROUP

MARCH 21, 2024

[Leveling the Field: Combining Proprietary Micro-Level Data with Machine Learning Methods for Housing Justice Research](#) ▶

SPEAKER:

Esteban Lopez Ochoa,

Assistant Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Texas at San Antonio

CO-SPONSOR:

Master of Urban Spatial Analytics

APRIL 5, 2024

[Innovating for Urban Resilience: 19th Annual Urban Leadership Forum](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

Jaime Alberto Pumarejo Heins, former Mayor, City of Barranquilla, Colombia

Andrew Melnik, former International Projects Manager, City of Bucha, Region of Kyiv, Ukraine

Lauren Sorkin, Executive Director, Resilient Cities Network

[See Spotlight on page 61 for more on this event.](#)

APRIL 9, 2024

[Vibrant Cities: Advancing Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Urban Development](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

Forhad Shilpi, Senior Economist, Development Research Group

Guy Michaels, Associate Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics (LSE)

Somik Lall, Director, World Bank's 2024 World Development Report

Mohammad Omar Masud, CEO, The Urban Unit

Gilles Duranton, Dean's Chair in Real Estate Professor, The Wharton School

[See Spotlight on page 63 for more on this event.](#)

APRIL 12, 2024

[Economic Opportunity for Everyone: The Role of CDFIs in Advancing and Building Opportunity](#) ▶

SPEAKERS:

Mayor Cherelle Parker, Mayor, Philadelphia

Della Clark, President & CEO, The Enterprise Center; Partner, Innovate Capital; Vice Chair, Mayor Parker's Transition

Jodie Harris, President, Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation

Donald Hinkle-Brown, President and CEO, Reinvestment Fund

Mihailo Temali, Founder and Senior Advisor, Neighborhood Development Center—MN

Mark Pinsky, Founding Partner, CDFI Friendly America; former CEO, OFN

CO-SPONSOR:

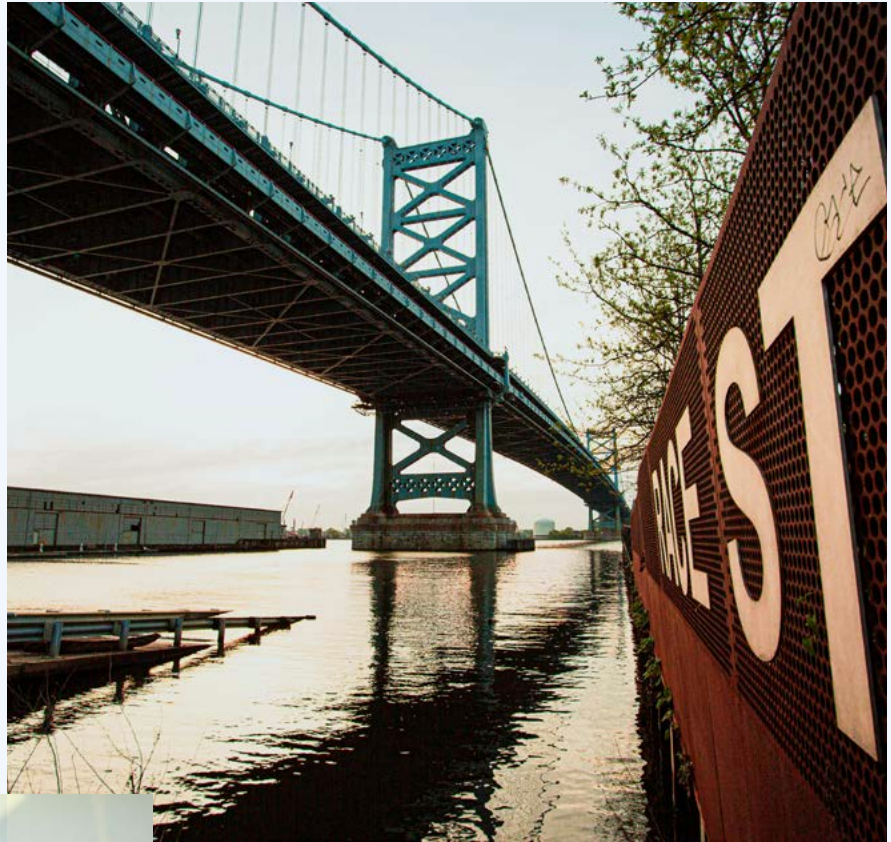
The Reinvestment Fund

[See Spotlight on page 65 for more on this event.](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON:

Nowak Memorial Lecture— Economic Opportunity for Everyone

Penn IUR and the Reinvestment Fund present The Jeremy Nowak Memorial Lecture annually to highlight Jeremy Nowak's enduring work to integrate public, private, and nonprofit expertise to achieve collective urban prosperity.




The annual lecture celebrates the late Jeremy Nowak.

This year's lecture, the sixth in the series, focused on the role Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) play in creating economic opportunity. This aligns with the key priorities and vision of Philadelphia's 100th mayor, Mayor Cherelle Parker, whose administration's aim is to make Philadelphia the safest, cleanest, and greenest big city in the nation with economic opportunity for everyone.

CDFIs like the Reinvestment Fund play an influential role in advancing wealth in underserved communities. The panelists discussed how their organizations approach community development in a variety of ways to advance economic opportunity and build joyful and thriving communities.



Philadelphia City Hall photo by C. Smyth for Visit Philadelphia®; far right photo by Eric Sucar.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

PENN IUR ADVANCES URBAN SCHOLARSHIP AT PENN BY SUPPORTING UNDERGRADUATE, MASTER'S, AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS. FROM AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAM LINKING STUDENTS AND URBAN LEADERS TO AWARDS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE IN URBANISM AND A CREDIT-BEARING RESEARCH COURSE, THESE ACTIVITIES ARE SHAPING THE URBAN LEADERS OF TOMORROW.

PENN IUR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Penn IUR's sponsors three undergraduate programs: the Fellows in Urban Leadership Program, the Undergraduate Urban Research Colloquium (UURC), and the Lawrence C. Nussdorf Student Award.



Above: Fellows in New York with Penn IUR Board Chair, Mark Rosenberg.

FELLOWS IN URBAN LEADERSHIP

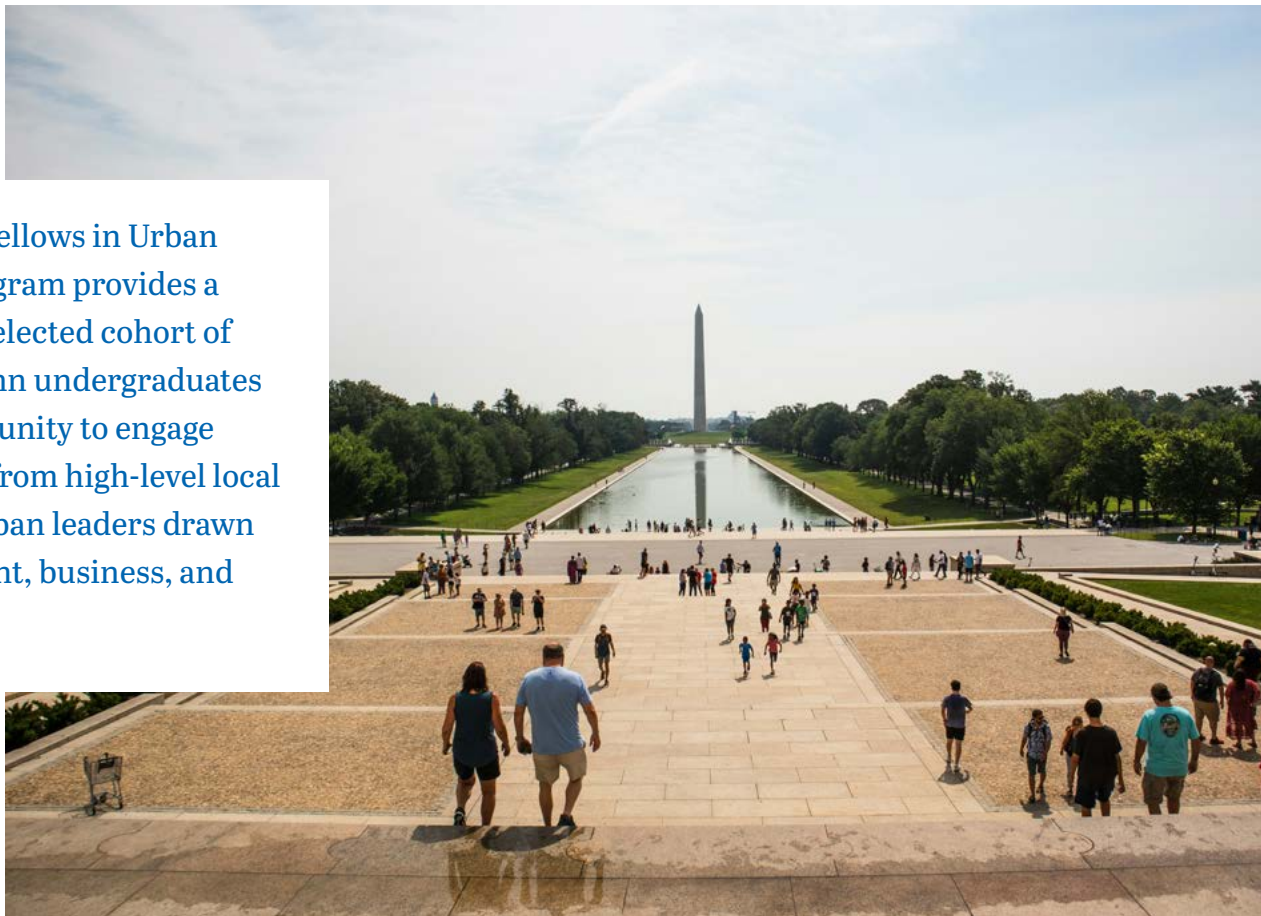
The Penn IUR Fellows in Urban Leadership program provides a competitively selected cohort of outstanding Penn undergraduates with the opportunity to engage with and learn from high-level local and regional urban leaders drawn from government, business, and civil society. In 2023–24, 16 Fellows met in small, off-the-record conversations with leaders from a range of sectors, including: Matt Bergheiser, the President of University City District (UCD); Hazem Galal, PricewaterhouseCooper's Cities and Local Government Global Leader; Anne Fadullon and Eleanor Sharpe, former Directors of the Department of Planning & Development at the City of Philadelphia; Rob Dubow, Philadelphia Director of Finance; and Michael Nutter, Former Mayor of Philadelphia.

The Fellows also visited Washington, D.C. and New York City. In New York City, the Fellows met Emily Rafferty, who has served in several important roles in the city: President, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Board Chair, Federal Reserve of New York; and Board Chair, NYC & Company, the city's tourism agency; Marcia Sells, Chief Diversity Officer, Metropolitan Opera; and William Lukashok, Penn IUR Advisory Board member and Director of Capital Markets at Prana Investments. The meetings were hosted in the office of Mark Rosenberg, Penn IUR Board Chair. In Washington, D.C., the Fellows met with Daniel Ricchetti, Deputy Special Representative for City and State Diplomacy; Olivia Reneau, Legislative Aide to Senator John Fetterman; Solomon Greene, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Research at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); Lawrence Parks, Penn IUR Advisory Board member and co-founder of Forethought Advisors; and Melanie Nussdorf, Penn IUR Advisory Board member and Partner, Steptoe & Johnson.

The 2023–24 Fellows in Urban Leadership are:

- **Arnav Aggarwal**, The Wharton School
(Majors: Computer Science, Finance, and Entrepreneurship)
- **Sameem Ahmadzai**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Majors: Urban Studies and Philosophy)
- **Mica Lin-Alves**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Urban Studies, Minor: Environmental Studies)
- **Emma Boockvar**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Neuroscience, Minors: Urban Studies and Chemistry)
- **Jed Chew**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Urban Studies, Minors: Public Policy and Real Estate)
- **Erica Edman**, School of Arts & Sciences (Major: Urban Studies, Minors: Consumer Psychology and Urban Education)
- **Mya Gordon**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Urban Studies, Minor: Sociology)
- **Louis Hu**, School of Arts & Sciences (Major: Biology, Minor: Urban Studies)
- **Annabelle Jin**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Neurobiology, Minor: English)
- **Charles Lane**, School of Arts & Sciences (Major: Philosophy, Politics & Economics (PPE), Minor: Sustainability and Environmental Management)
- **Lynn Larabi**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Political Science, Minor: Anthropology)
- **Melody Luo**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Political Science, Minors: Legal Studies and History)
- **Shobhit Prasad**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Majors: Biology and Sociology)
- **Shivam Shah**, The Wharton School (Major: Economics, Minor: Urban Education and Urban Studies)
- **Timethius J. Terrell**, School of Arts & Sciences (Major: Psychology, Minors: Linguistics and Legal Studies and History)
- **Khue Tran**, School of Arts & Sciences (Major: Earth and Environmental Science, Minor: Asian American Studies (ASAM))
- **Abigail Weinstein**, School of Arts & Sciences
(Major: Design, Minor: Environmental Studies, Mechanical Engineering, and Architecture)
- **Nicholas Yohn**, The Wharton School
(Majors: Finance and Business Analytics, Minor: Data Science)

The Penn IUR Fellows in Urban Leadership program provides a competitively selected cohort of outstanding Penn undergraduates with the opportunity to engage with and learn from high-level local and regional urban leaders drawn from government, business, and civil society.





From left to right: Marielle Kang; Melanie Nussdorf, Penn IUR Board Member and wife of the late Lawrence C. Nussdorf; Khalid Mohieldin; and Joey Jung. Photo by Eric Sucar.

LAWRENCE C. NUSSDORF STUDENT AWARD

Penn IUR honors exemplary undergraduate students from the University of Pennsylvania with the Nussdorf Student Award. The award is named for the late Lawrence C. Nussdorf, founding Penn IUR board member, who deeply valued the brilliance and enthusiasm of Penn's undergraduate students.

Penn IUR Co-Directors Eugénie Birch and Susan Wachter presented the Nussdorf Student Award to the three recent graduates:

- **Joey Jung C'24** majored in Urban Studies and Political Science, minoring in Public Policy and Data Analytics. With his mentor, Dr. Yeonhwa Lee, he conducted research on gentrification through the UURC program in 2022 and was a 2023–24 Penn IUR Undergraduate Fellow in Urban Leadership. Jung previously worked at the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations and Econsult in Philadelphia and Charter Cities Institute in Washington, D.C.
- **Marielle Kang C'24** studied Environmental Studies with a concentration in Sustainability and Environmental Management with minors in Urban Studies and Economic Policy. She explored her interest in climate risk management and resiliency with mentor and Penn IUR Faculty Fellow Dr. Simon Richter as a participant in the spring 2024 UURC. Her research focused on Cebu City, Philippines, and private sector participation in relief efforts following Typhoon Odette in 2021.
- **Khalid Mohieldin C'24** majored in Urban Studies with a minor in History and African Studies on the pre-law track. Attentive to global urbanization trends and the intersections between urbanization, displacement, and public health, he has specific interests in African and southern European nations.



UNDERGRADUATE URBAN RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM (UURC)

Penn IUR has sponsored CPLN 5280/URBS 4280 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 & Regional Planning or the School of Arts & Sciences' Urban Studies Program.

The 2023–2024 cohort included the following students and projects:

- **Mikun Fasan**, Biochemistry and Urban Studies, College of Arts & Sciences;
Simon Webber, Urban Studies, College of Arts & Sciences
Spatial Analysis of Residential Zoning Classifications and their Colocation with Microclimate Externalities
Chris Quattro, Research Mentor, Assistant Professor, Geography and Planning Department, Appalachian State University
- **Marielle Kang**, Environmental Studies, College of Arts & Sciences
Analyzing Stakeholder Engagement in Cebu, Philippines during Typhoon Odette
Simon Richter, Research Mentor, Class of 1965 Endowed Term Professor of German, Germanic Languages and Literatures
- **Vivian Li**, Business Analytics and Marketing, Wharton
Localizing International Manufacturing Companies in the U.S.— Examining Successful Labor Practices
Bruce Zou, Research Mentor, Organizational Learning & Leadership, Graduate School of Education
- **Khalid Mohieldin**, Urban Studies, College of Arts & Sciences Assessing the Spatial Dimensions and Consequences of Suburban Poverty in the U.S.
Heidi Artigue, Research Mentor, PhD Student, Applied Economics, Wharton
- **Natalie Vasquez**, Urban Studies, College of Arts & Sciences
Safety Perceptions Among Womxn from Socially Marginalized Communities in Philadelphia: Preliminary Findings
Heidi Artigue, Research Mentor, PhD Student, Applied Economics, Wharton

UURC participants, including Simon Webber (bottom), present their research at the Urban Doctoral Symposium. Photos by Eric Sucar.

PENN IUR GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES



GRADUATE STUDIO COURSE

In Fall 2023, Penn IUR sponsored an interdisciplinary graduate course, ‘Topics in International Development: Urban Plans for the Ukraine,’ led by Penn IUR Co-Director Eugénie Birch and Penn IUR Faculty Fellow David Gouverneur, both faculty in City & Regional Planning. Undertaken as a project for the U.S. Department of State’s Diplomacy Lab that Penn joined last spring, the course centered on developing a climate-sensitive conceptual plan for the reconstruction of Bucha, Ukraine, a war-torn site 15 kilometers from Kyiv.

In January 2024, the students presented their green infrastructure framework for Bucha to an audience including the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States, Oksana Markarova, and several officials from the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C.

MASTER OF URBAN SPATIAL ANALYTICS (MUSA)

Penn’s Master of Urban Spatial Analytics (MUSA) is a one-year graduate program that teaches students how to use spatial analysis and data science to address the most pressing urban public policy and city planning issues of today. Penn IUR contributes to the MUSA program through convening its Advisory Board and co-hosting events that connect students to experts who are applying these methods to a variety of real-world problems.

MUSA Advisory Board

- **Eugénie Birch**, Co-Director of Penn IUR; Lawrence C. Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research and Education, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
- **Eric Bradlow**, K.P. Chao Professor, Professor of Marketing; Vice Dean of Analytics, The Wharton School
- **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
- **Elizabeth Delmelle**, Associate Professor; Director, MUSA Program, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
- **Erick Guerra**, Associate Professor; Director, Cm2 University Transportation Center; Associate Dean for Research, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
- **Shane Jensen**, Professor of Statistics, The Wharton School
- **Allison Lassiter**, Assistant Professor, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
- **Megan Ryerson**, UPS Chair of Transportation; Associate Chair, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
- **Susan Wachter**, Co-Director of Penn IUR; Albert Sussman Professor of Real Estate, The Wharton School

Top: Weitzman students Leo Wagner, Laura Frances, and Chenxi Zhu in class in the Penn IUR Conference Room. Photo by Eric Sucar. Bottom: Weitzman students at the Penn Biden Center in Washington, D.C. with Oksana Markarova, Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States; Dorothy McAuliffe, U.S. Special Representative for Global Partnerships, Department of State; John Thompson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Environment, Department of State; and Dr. Eugénie Birch, Co-Director, Penn IUR. Photo by the Department of State.

Penn Urban Doctoral Symposium



Left: Genie Birch, Elaine Simon, and David Grazian, Co-Director of Urban Studies.
Right: Bruce Zou presents his dissertation at the Urban Doctoral Symposium. Photos by Eric Sucar.

PENN IUR URBAN DOCTORAL ACTIVITIES

The Urban Doctoral Symposium, co-sponsored with the Penn Urban Studies Program, celebrates graduating urban-focused doctoral students with an end-of-the-year convening where they document and share new ideas in urban research across disciplines. This year, Penn IUR also honored a longtime collaborator, Dr. Elaine Simon, Co-Director of the Penn Urban Studies Program, who has long co-hosted the symposium. Dr. Bruce Zou offered the keynote, entitled “Localizing International Manufacturing Companies in the U.S.—Examining Successful Labor Practices.” The keynote was followed by a poster session that featured the work of doctoral candidates still advancing their research.

The poster presentation included:

- **Rachel Bondra**, Fellow in the Initiative in the History of the Built Environment, Weitzman School of Design
“A Human Dumping Ground’: Waste and the Making of Rikers Island, 1884–1939”
- **Sherrie Cheng**, Economics, College of Arts & Sciences
“Urban Highway Removal: Evidence from Rochester’s Inner Loop”
- **Kirstin Fisk Engelman**, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
“How Can Planners Become Involved in Planning for Blue Carbon?”
- **Rance Graham-Bailey**, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
“Moving Towards the Market: The Rental Assistance Demonstration and Transforming Public Housing”
- **Jasmine Siyu Wu**, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
“Barriers to Obtaining a Young Driver License: Financial & Physical Access Matter”
- **Ziyi Tang**, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
“Exploring the Impact of Automated Buses on Travel Mode Choice Dynamics”
- **Hui Tian**, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
“Predicting Salinization of Groundwater Under Sea Level Rise Scenarios with Machine Learning Models”
- **Tiffany M. Tran**, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design
“Changing Water into Land: Estimates of Informal Land Reclamation from a Pilot Study of Cirebon City, Indonesia”



Left center photo by Sudip Maiti (Kolkata, India).



PENN IUR PEOPLE

PENN IUR'S NETWORKS, BOTH ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL, PROMOTE EXPLORATION OF URBAN ISSUES ACROSS DISCIPLINES AND SECTORS, WHILE ITS ADVISORY BOARDS HELP SHAPE ITS PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES.

Penn IUR has many collaborators for its research and programs. To honor the many experts behind this work, six categories were established: Faculty Fellows, Scholars, Emerging Scholars, Fellows, Visiting Scholars, and Affiliated Doctoral Students. Through these networks, Penn IUR aims to foster an environment that encourages cross-disciplinary connections and nurtures a collaborative spirit across campus and beyond.

PENN IUR FACULTY FELLOWS

PENN FACULTY WITH A DEMONSTRATED INTEREST IN CITIES

Francesca Russello Ammon

Associate Professor, City & Regional Planning and Historic Preservation, Weitzman School of Design

David Barnes

Associate Professor, History and Sociology of Science, School of Arts & Sciences

Jere Behrman

William R. Keenan, Jr. Professor of Economics, Economics, School of Arts & Sciences

Eugénie Birch

Co-Director, Penn Institute for Urban Research; Lawrence C. Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research and Education and Chair of Graduate Group, Department of City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design

Matthijs Bouw

Professor of Practice and McHarg Center Fellow for Risk and Resilience, Department of Landscape Architecture, Weitzman School of Design

William Burke-White

Professor of Law, Penn Carey Law School

Carolyn Cannuscio

Associate Professor of Family Medicine and Community Health, Public Health, Perelman School of Medicine

Camille Zubrinsky Charles

Walter H. and Leonore C. Annenberg Professor in the Social Sciences; Professor of Sociology, Africana Studies & Education, School of Arts & Sciences

Ram Cnaan

Professor and Program Director, Program for Religion and Social Policy Research; Faculty Director, Goldring Reentry Initiative, Social Welfare, School of Social Policy and Practice

Dennis Culhane

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

Thomas Daniels

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Wilks Family Director, Ian L. McHarg Center, Weitzman School of Design

Lance Freeman

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PENN IUR FELLOWS

EXPERT PRACTITIONERS AND POLICYMAKERS SHAPING THE WORLD'S CITIES

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Jonathan Barnett

Professor Emeritus of Practice in City & Regional Planning, City & Regional Planning

Tim Bartik

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María Alicia Becdach

Practitioner Architect and Urban Planning Consultant

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President and CEO, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

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Head, Governance Indicators and Performance Evaluation Division, Directorate for Public Governance, OECD

Seung Ah Byun

Chester County Water Resources Authority, Water Resources Association of the Delaware River Basin

Shahana Chattaraj

Director, Research Data and Innovation, WRI India, World Resources Institute

Mengke Chen

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Founder and Senior Advisor, American Triple I Partners

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Urban Affairs Consultant, United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT)

Andrew Davidson

President, Andrew Davidson & Co. Inc.; Founder, Financial Life Cycle Education Corp

Chandan Deuskar

Urban Development Specialist, The World Bank

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Community Development Senior Economic Officer, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

Derek Douglas

President, Civic Committee and the Commercial Club of Chicago

Brian English

Founder and Owner, Origin Studio

Anne Fadullon

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John Paul Farmer

Chief Innovation Officer & President of WeLink Cities, WeLink

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President Emeritus and Distinguished Professor, Northeastern University

David Gest

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Weitzman School of Design

Tali Ziv

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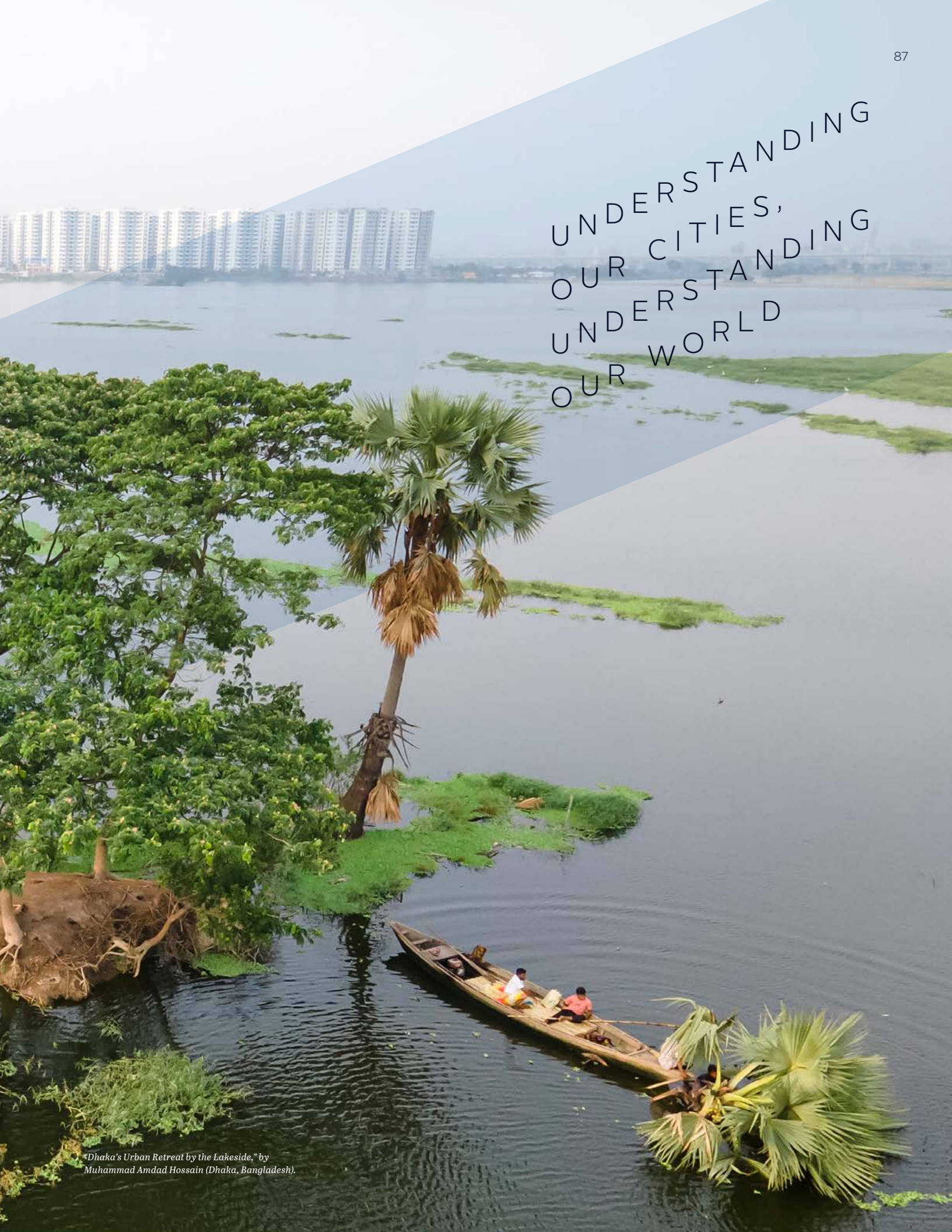
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UNDERSTANDING
OUR CITIES,
UNDERSTANDING
OUR WORLD



*"Dhaka's Urban Retreat by the Lakeside," by
Muhammad Amdad Hossain (Dhaka, Bangladesh).*

LOOKING AHEAD



THIS COMING YEAR,
PENN IUR TURNS 20.

It will be a year to elevate the importance of cities— as drivers of innovation in an ever-changing world— and Penn’s role as an unparalleled community of scholars and thought-leaders bringing critical knowledge on cities to the fore. Join us as we further Penn IUR’s key initiatives and celebrate the programs and partnerships that are deepening our collective understanding of cities.



*Photos from left:
Lorraine Ruppert (Con Dao, Vietnam); Akshay Nagar (Mumbai, India); Eric Sucar; Tiffany Luo (Likeng, China); Gabriela Toscano (Albany, NY).*

CLIMATE FINANCE

As the global secretariat of the SDSN Global Commission on Urban SDG Finance, Penn IUR will continue to explore one of the most critical aspects of addressing climate change—how to finance cities' climate resiliency and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

RAPID URBANIZATION AND URBAN INFORMALITY

Penn IUR hosts the Forum on Urban Informality which convenes graduate students, PhD Candidates, faculty, and practitioners to share ideas and explore the way informality is shaping sustainable urban development. Discussions cover such topics as informal housing and land tenure, provisioning social and ecological services, infrastructure development, disaster preparedness and response, and informal economies.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Penn IUR and partners at Penn and beyond will host convenings and conduct research on housing affordability in the U.S., continuing its examination of the underlying structural factors that result in the lack of affordable housing as well as local and national solutions for access to safe, secure, and affordable housing.

RESILIENT URBAN INNOVATION

Penn IUR will collaborate locally and internationally to study and highlight greening innovations such as the transformative vacant land work of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), urban nature-based solutions (uNbS) finance research Penn IUR is conducting for the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), and urban innovation ecosystem research with the Guangzhou Institute for Urban Innovation.



SPECIAL BRIEFINGS ON THE FISCAL OUTLOOK OF STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Penn IUR and the Volcker Alliance will produce the fifth year of this virtual series, continuing to provide timely commentary on issues of city and state fiscal sustainability. The series brings urban and national experts together to investigate challenges facing all aspects of metropolitan economic health, from housing and the environment to pensions and infrastructure.

URBAN SCHOLARSHIP PUBLICATIONS

Partnerships with Penn Press for the City in the 21st Century Book Series and SSRN eJournal enable Penn IUR to connect groundbreaking ideas in urban research to the world. Covering globalization and governance to education and equity, the 50-plus volume C21 series counts mayors, scholars and policymakers among its authors who share invaluable insights on the history and future of our cities. The SSRN eJournal, meanwhile, offers scholars a platform for posting early research and identifying collaborators for the latest research.

20TH ANNUAL PENN IUR URBAN LEADERSHIP FORUM

In this landmark event, Penn IUR will present the Lawrence C. Nussdorf Urban Leadership Prize to a select group of innovative leaders who are shaping and leading cities for a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future. It will also recognize outstanding Penn students who are demonstrating exceptional dedication to the study of cities, their challenges, and their opportunities.

NOWAK MEMORIAL LECTURE

Penn IUR and The Reinvestment Fund (TRF) will host the 7th annual lecture in this series to celebrate the legacy of former Penn IUR board member and TRF founder, Jeremy Nowak. The series aims to highlight Nowak's enduring work to integrate public, private, and nonprofit expertise to achieve collective urban prosperity, convening experts on topics that manifest the connections between the academic and applied aspects of urban development.



Clockwise from left: Amitava Chandra (Guwahati city in Assam in India); Tayeba Batool (Islamabad, Pakistan); Spencer Castle (Chinatown Philadelphia, PA); Harrison Hale (North Philadelphia, PA); Murtaza Ali (Dal Lake, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India); Dhivya Arasappan (Rail Park in Philadelphia, PA); Federico Harte (State College, PA).

UNDERGRADUATE URBAN RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM (UURC)

The 20th cohort of UURC students and faculty mentors will convene in Spring 2025. Penn IUR will showcase the projects tackled by course participants as they learn best practices in urban research, including quantitative and qualitative methods from across a range of disciplines.

PENN IUR FELLOWS IN URBAN LEADERSHIP (FUL)

This coming year, Penn IUR welcomes the seventh cohort since the inception of the FUL program, which connects undergraduates interested in urban issues with high-level urban leaders. Penn IUR will host special events to connect students, past and present, to one another and to leading urbanists.

MASTER OF URBAN SPATIAL ANALYTICS (MUSA)

Penn IUR launched the MUSA program 20 years ago and today remains a supporter of the program, now led by the Weitzman School of Design, through special events for students and the public on state-of-the-art spatial analytics innovations and their application to urban challenges.

PENN DOCTORAL SYMPOSIUM

In partnership with Penn's Urban Studies program, Penn IUR will host a year-end program sharing the work of newly graduated doctoral students and members of Penn IUR's doctoral network, who are adding new and pioneering scholarship to Penn's canon of urban research.





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THE REPORT



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