

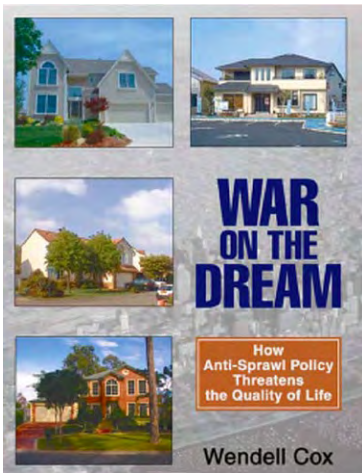


## New York: Threats and Opportunities

# War on the Dream

*How Anti-Sprawl Policy Threatens the Quality of Life*

By Wendell Cox



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**Table One: Basic Information about the New York Metropolitan/Urban Area**

<i>Parameter</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Similar to</i>
Metropolitan area 2005 population <sup>1</sup>	21,904,000	Jakarta, Seoul, Mexico City
Urban Area 2000 Population <sup>2</sup>	19,666,000	Seoul
Urban Land Area in 2000 (square miles)	4,325	Nearly 50% larger than Tokyo-Yokohama and 100% larger than Los Angeles or Chicago
Urban Land Area (square kilometers)	11,202	
Population Per Square Mile	4,500	Copenhagen, Montreal, Miami, Melbourne
Population Per Square Kilometer	1,750	

1. County-based consolidated metropolitan area.

2. Continuously built-up area including New York, Bridgeport, New Haven, Danbury, Trenton, and Hightstown.

30 November 2006

### Starting with the Myths

What is the most dense urban area in the United States? If you answered New York, you are wrong. It is Los Angeles. Where was the first freeway opened? If you answered Los Angeles you are wrong. If you answered New York, you are probably right. This and more is outlined below in a description of what for 200 years has been America's principal urban area.

New York is the world's second most-heavily populated

urban area (area of continuous urban development or urban agglomeration). New York is located at the mouth of the Hudson River at a point where three major islands—Manhattan, Long Island, and Staten Island—and a number of waterways converge. Most of the urban area is at relatively low elevation, though there are hills especially to the west in New Jersey and to the east in Connecticut. There are also larger hills to the north in the Hudson Valley. Figures 1 and 2 show the metropolitan area and the inner portion of the New York urban area.



Figure 1: New York Metropolitan Area

### Introduction

For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, New York was the largest urban area in the world. New York had passed London during the 1910s and remained the largest urban area until it was passed by Tokyo-Yokohama in the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> During

its period of predominance, New York became the world's first megacity --- an urban area with more than 10,000,000 population, in around 1930.<sup>2</sup> New York's growth slowed considerably in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and New York now has 14,000,000 fewer people than Tokyo-Yokohama.<sup>3</sup> Over the next 10 years, it is likely that New

York's population will also be exceeded by Jakarta,<sup>4</sup> Delhi<sup>5</sup> and Mumbai,<sup>6</sup> falling to fifth place. Already, it appears likely that the New York metropolitan area (as opposed to the urban area) has slipped to number three in the world, trailing not only Tokyo-Yokohama, but also Jakarta (Jabotabek).

Further, at present rates of growth New York could fall behind Los Angeles to become the second largest urban area in the United States by 2035. The New York metropolitan area is rapidly losing domestic migrants --- people who move within the nation. Between 2000 and 2005, the New York metropolitan area lost 1.1 million domestic migrants (This does not include births, deaths and net international migration). Moreover, the rate is accelerating, perhaps

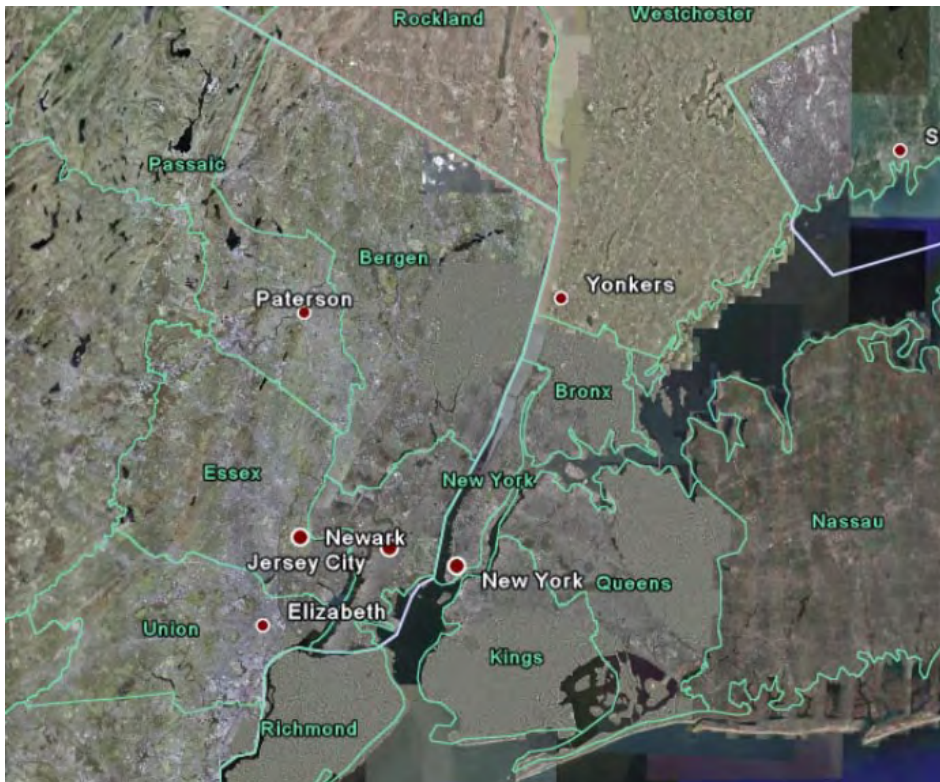


Figure 2: New York Urban Area: Inner Area

Moreover, the rate is accelerating, perhaps





Figure 3: Suburban Density: Los Angeles vs. New York

influenced by New York’s rapidly declining housing affordability.

**Land Area:** However, in one respect, it is unlikely that New York will soon be displaced as the world’s largest. The New York urban area is, by far, the most sprawling in the world. This may seem surprising given the very high density of New York City, and especially Manhattan. However, New York’s very low density suburbs

Despite perceptions to the contrary, New York sprawls more than Los Angeles, and, for that matter more than any other urban area in the world. The New York urban area covers 4,350 square miles, nearly 50 percent more than second ranking Tokyo-Yokohama (which has approximately 70 percent more population). The New York urban area covers nearly double the area of the Los Angeles urban area, despite having barely 25 percent more population.

In 1950, the New York urban area was much smaller, though, even then, it covered more land area than any other urban area in the world. The population density was 9,800, more than double today’s 4,500. Even in 1950, New York covered 50 percent more land than Los Angeles.

***Myth #1: Los Angeles Sprawls More than New York.** The reality is that, according to US Bureau of the Census data, the urbanization of New York covers approximately twice as much land area as the urbanization of Los Angeles. The likelihood is that New York has been the most sprawling urban area in the world since passing London in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

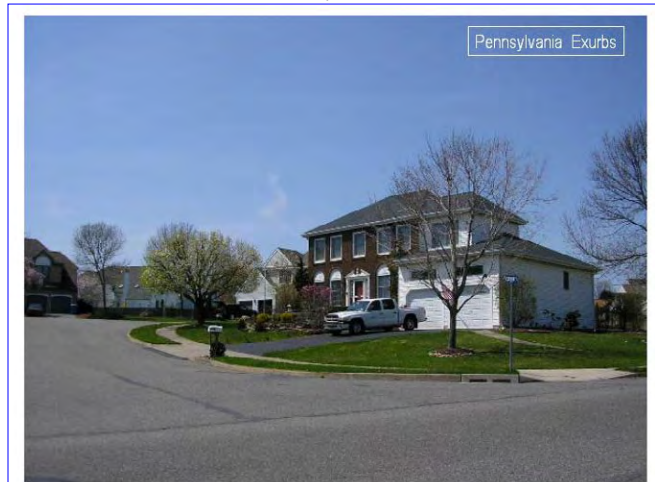
**Urban and Suburban Growth:** Among the 30 counties that compose the New York Consolidated Area (consolidated metropolitan area), nearly all growth has been in the suburbs. Between 1950 and 2005, New York City added little more than 100,000 residents. The

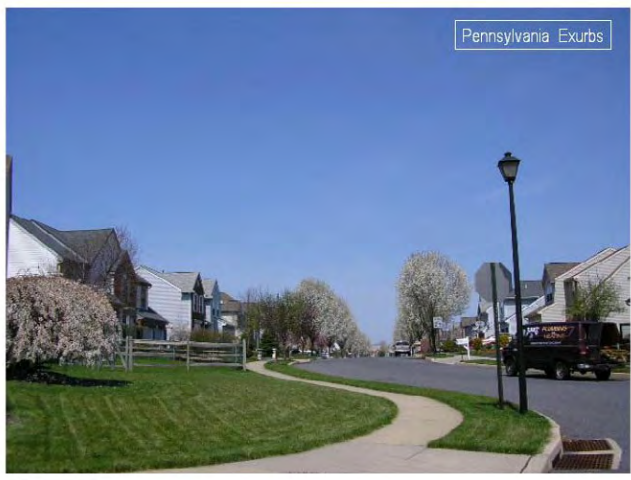
suburban counties captured more than 99.5 percent of the growth, adding 6,300,000 new residents. Only four other metropolitan US metropolitan areas have more population than the New York suburban increase since 1950, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington-Baltimore and San Francisco-San Jose.

***Myth #2: New York is More Dense than Los Angeles.** The reality is that, according to US Bureau of the Census data, the Los Angeles urban area is more than one third more dense than the New York urban area. Of course, New York has a more dense core than Los Angeles. However, the suburbs of Los Angeles are built at far higher densities, which is illustrated in Figure 3.*

## The Exurbs

There are a number of exurbs outside the urban area but within the metropolitan area (labor market). The exurbs stretch to the state of Pennsylvania, on the west side of the Delaware River, across New Jersey from the central business district. The Pennsylvania exurbs are at least 60





miles (100 kilometers), by air, from Manhattan's central business district. These exurbs have been developed, in part, because land use restrictions in the state of New Jersey have made new residential development very expensive and even impossible.

The new residential development in Pennsylvania is expanding rapidly, into Monroe and Lackawanna counties. It seems possible that the Allentown-Bethlehem metropolitan area could be added to the New York metropolitan area by the Bureau of the Census as more development occurs. If Allentown-Bethlehem were added to the New York metropolitan area, it would take at least another 10 years for metropolitan Los Angeles to exceed metropolitan New York's population.

New York, Connecticut and New Jersey also have exurban communities. Examples include Newburgh, Poughkeepsie in the Hudson Valley and Waterbury in Connecticut. Poughkeepsie is in Dutchess County, which also includes Hyde Park, home to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library. At the eastern end of Suffolk County is exurban Montauk, located 115 miles from Manhattan.

## The Urban Area

The Bureau of the Census uses a conservative definition of the New York urban area. It is clear to anyone examining maps, satellite photographs or the actual environment that the continuous urbanization of New York extends across the Connecticut border to New Haven and that continuous urbanization extends southward from New Brunswick, New Jersey to Hightstown and Trenton. Moreover, the economic integration of these areas is indisputable, with strong labor and transportation links, especially to the core. Yet, these areas are excluded by the Bureau of the Census from the New York urban area.<sup>7</sup> Thus, Demographia defines the New York urban area to

be larger than the area designated by the US Bureau of the Census.<sup>8</sup>

**The Suburbs:** Nearly 60 percent of the New York urban area population is in the suburbs, which are in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. There are four principal sectors, Long Island and the Hudson Valley in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut

**Long Island Suburbs:** Beyond Brooklyn and Queens on Long Island lie two large suburban counties, Nassau and Suffolk. Nassau County was the home of the fabled and first Levittown housing development, which provided an early model for the suburbanization that occurred around the United States and the rest of the high-income world following World War II. Densities are comparatively high for a suburban area in western Nassau County, near Queens. However, further to the east and into Suffolk County, densities fall rapidly.



**Hudson River Suburbs:** The suburbs of Westchester County extend beyond the Bronx, bordered by the Hudson River and the Connecticut border. These suburbs extend across the Tappan Zee Bridge to Orange and Rockland Counties. As in the case of Long Island, densities are higher adjacent to New York City (the Bronx), but fall off rapidly beyond that. Westchester County contains some of the most affluent suburbs in the area.

**New Jersey Suburbs:** The largest suburban population is in New Jersey, which contains more than one-half of the suburban population and nearly one-third of the urban area population. New Jersey is separated from New York City by the Hudson River. A number of the inner suburbs have land use similar to that of New York City. Cities such as Jersey City, Hoboken, West New York and Bayonne. All of these have high and mid-rise residential buildings and high densities. Jersey City has built a large new business district directly across from Lower Manhattan. The tallest building, the Goldman Sachs building, rivals the height of

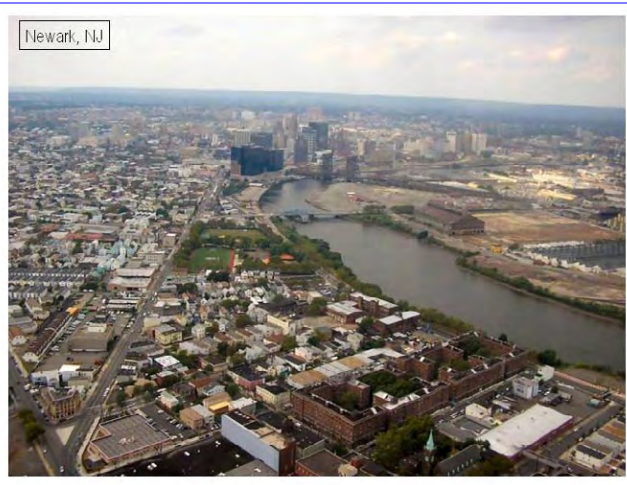




Jersey City

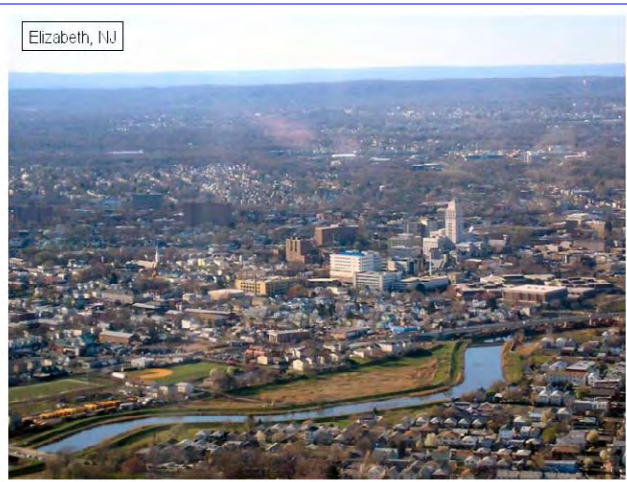
the tallest buildings across the river in Lower Manhattan.

The city of Newark is to the west of Jersey City. Newark is the largest city in New Jersey, though has lost 40 percent of its population since 1930, when it reached a



Newark, NJ

peak of 442,000. Newark's 2000 population was 274,000. Newark Liberty International Airport is located in Newark. Elizabeth, to the south of Newark, has a population of more than 100,000, a strong historic commercial core and



Elizabeth, NJ



New Jersey Suburbs

relatively high suburban densities.

Beyond the inner suburbs, the typical, low density New York suburban pattern emerges. The suburbs that developed in the years immediately following World War II exhibit somewhat higher densities, while those built in the 1970s and later have very low densities.



New Jersey Suburbs

**Connecticut Suburbs:** Connecticut has some of the lowest density suburbs in the New York area. The Connecticut suburbs are farther from New York City and were thus developed much later. Connecticut has no higher density suburbs similar to Hudson and Essex Counties in New Jersey, except for the older cities that have been engulfed by New York's suburbanization, such as Bridgeport and New Haven.

**New York City:** The core city of the New York urban area is New York (officially "Greater New York" and unofficially New York City), which is an amalgamation of counties implemented in 1898. The amalgamation occurred principally due to New York fears that Brooklyn and Chicago were poised to eventually exceed it in population. Both New York and Brooklyn had plenty of undeveloped land and eventually exceeded the peak

Table Two: New York Metropolitan Area and Urban Area

Area	Population	Land Area (Square Miles)	Population per Square Mile	Population per Square Kilometer	Compared to Los Angeles Urban Area
<b>New York Urban Area</b>					
New York City	8,008,000	303	26,429	10,204	4.33
New Jersey Suburbs: Inner	1,929,000	276	6,989	2,699	1.15
New Jersey Suburbs: Outer	4,338,000	1,659	2,616	1,010	0.43
New York Suburbs	3,863,000	1,237	3,123	1,206	0.51
Connecticut Suburbs	1,527,000	856	1,783	689	0.29
Total Suburban	5,390,000	2,093	2,575	994	0.42
<b>Total: New York Urban Area</b>	<b>19,665,000</b>	<b>4,331</b>	<b>4,541</b>	<b>1,753</b>	<b>0.74</b>
<b>Exurban Urban Areas</b>					
Kingston, NY	53,000	34	1,575	608	0.26
Middletown, NY	50,000	28	1,775	685	0.29
Poughkeepsie--Newburgh, NY	352,000	265	1,328	513	0.22
Waterbury, CT	189,000	98	1,931	746	0.32
<b>Total Exurban Urban Areas</b>	<b>645,000</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>1,519</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>0.25</b>
<b>Total All Urban Areas</b>	<b>20,310,000</b>	<b>4,755</b>	<b>4,271</b>	<b>1,649</b>	<b>0.70</b>
<b>Outside Urban Areas</b>	<b>1,052,000</b>				
<b>Metropolitan Area</b>	<b>21,362,000</b>				

Note: New Jersey inner suburbs: Hudson, Essex and Union Counties.

population of Manhattan. This kind of civic “envy” has been a principal propelling force in other municipal mergers as well, the most recent being Louisville and Jefferson County, Kentucky, after Louisville had fallen behind Lexington as Kentucky’s largest municipality.

New York City had a population of 8.144 million in 2005, slightly down from its 2004 peak and above the previous peak of 7.9 million in 1970. By 1980, the population of New York City had declined to 7.1 million and has since recovered strongly. However, recent trends are not as positive, with domestic migration from the City of 800,000, or two thirds of the metropolitan area domestic out migration. Moreover, from 2004 to 2005, the city experienced a net loss of more than 20,000 residents.

New York City is composed of five counties (boroughs), four of which are on islands.

**Manhattan:** Manhattan, or New York County, is what is generally associated with New York (and before 1898, it was New York). Manhattan contains the central business district, which runs from 59<sup>th</sup> Street (the south boundary of Central Park) to the southern end of the island, which is Lower Manhattan. New York probably has the greatest concentration of tall buildings in the world. However, with



the building rates in Asian urban areas, this distinction could be lost in the years to come, to Shanghai, Hong Kong or Shenzhen.

The Hudson River separates Manhattan from New Jersey on the west side. To the east, the East River lies between Manhattan and Long Island (Brooklyn and Queens). The Harlem River runs on the north and northeast sides, dividing Manhattan from the Bronx. To the south is New York Harbor. The Statue of Liberty is located in New York Harbor.



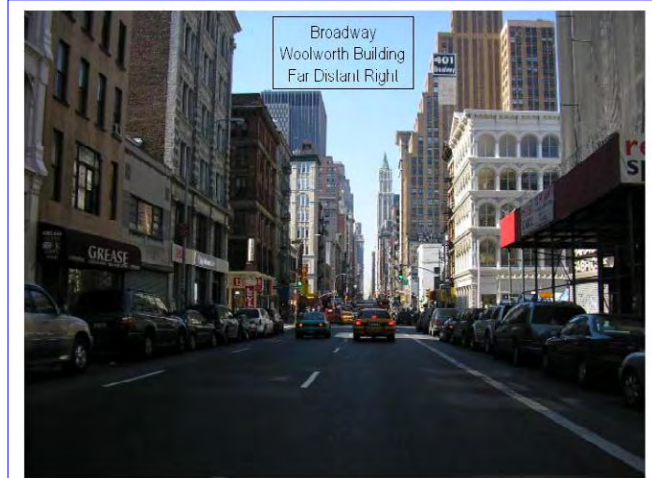


Manhattan is largely covered by a grid street system, with broad numbered avenues running north and south, and numbered streets running east and west. The lower, older part of the island has the more random street pattern typical of European city cores. Broadway is aligned diagonally from the southern tip of the island, then straightens out and emerges into the Bronx at the north end of the island. Broadway crosses major intersections to form major squares at 14<sup>th</sup> Street (Union Square), 23<sup>rd</sup> Street (Madison Square), 34<sup>th</sup> Street (Herald Square), 42<sup>nd</sup> Street (Times Square) and 59<sup>th</sup> Street (Columbus Circle).



The largest area of commercial and high-rise development is in Mid-town, which is from Penn Station, near 34<sup>th</sup> Street, to 59<sup>th</sup> Street. New York's central business district is the second largest in the world (after Tokyo's Yamanote Loop), with approximately 2,000,000 jobs. North of the central business district is Central Park, with high-rise residential buildings on both the west and east side. North of Central Park is Harlem, which has historically been one of the nation's largest African-American communities. The Mid-Town business district is the world's most dense, which more than 600,000 jobs

per square mile (230,000 per square kilometer). This is a full one-third more than second ranking Hong Kong (Central and Wan Chai).<sup>9</sup> In 1990, Mid-Town had more than 700,000 jobs, approximately double the number of jobs in Lower Manhattan.



There is also considerable high-density residential development in the commercial district (south of 59<sup>th</sup> Street). To the east of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, much of the development is residential. There is also strong residential development between Mid-Town and Lower Manhattan, such as Greenwich Village. The residential component of the core makes Manhattan one of the few central business districts in the United States with activity in the evenings. Even so, much of Lower Manhattan is devoid of residences and tends to be as lifeless after dark as the downtown areas of most American urban areas.



Manhattan was the destination of millions of immigrants from Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Lower East Side developed as a notoriously dense and dangerous place. In 1900, the population density of the Lower East Side 10<sup>th</sup> Ward reached 434,000, a density

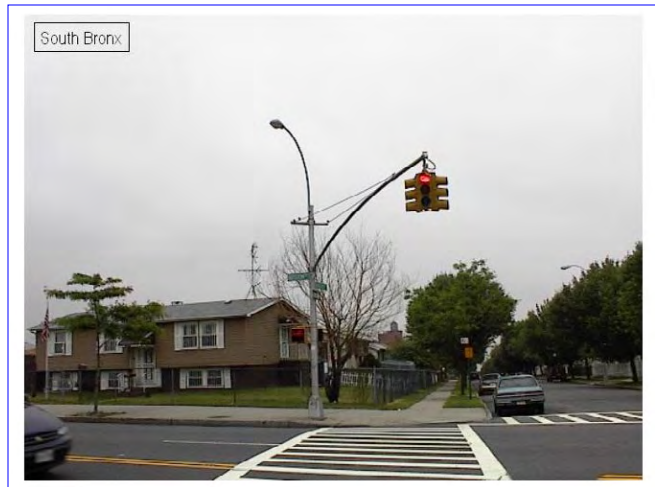


four times that of any current community district in the city, higher than any of Mumbai's wards and more than double that of any census tract in the nation in 2000.<sup>10</sup>

Manhattan reached a population peak of more than 2,300,000 in 1910, and has since fallen by one third to approximately 1,500,000. Today, Manhattan has a population density of approximately 70,000 per square mile (27,000 per square kilometer), more than the 55,000 per square mile (21,000 per square kilometer) of the ville de Paris.<sup>11</sup> Manhattan peaked at approximately 110,000 per square mile (42,000 per square km) in 1910.

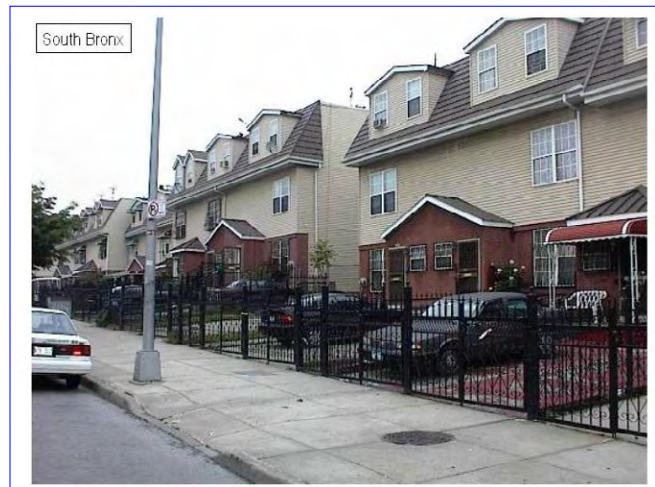
**Brooklyn:** Brooklyn (Kings County) is located on Long Island. Brooklyn developed comparatively early and by 1890 had a population of 800,000, more than one-half that of Manhattan, which was then all that there was of New York City. Brooklyn has large neighborhoods of high-rise apartment and condominium buildings. Brooklyn has as storied past, perhaps never having recovered from its abandonment by the Dodgers baseball team, which moved to Los Angeles in 1958. Brooklyn has a considerable central business district on its own, with an employment base of more than 100,000. Brooklyn and the Bronx have some of the least attractive urban environments in the nation, with elevated railways running over the top of major streets and adjacent to second or third story residential units. The same urban form is emerging in places like Delhi and Bangkok, where new elevated Metro systems have turned streets into near dungeons.

**The Bronx:** The Bronx (Bronx County) is the only borough of New York City that is on the mainland. The Bronx, with Brooklyn, shares the dubious distinction of major streets shadowed under ponderous elevated Metro lines. The Bronx is also contains Yankee Stadium, which is the home of the New York Yankees, by far, which has the highest number of World Series titles of any major league baseball. By the way, the World Series originally had nothing to do with a "world championship." The World



Series was named after its original sponsor, the New York World newspaper.

The Bronx suffered from urban deterioration more than any other community in the United States. What had been a strong, middle-income residential area of the Bronx (a borough of the city of New York) had become a virtual wasteland during the 1970s. From Charlotte Street and Boston Road the view was, and not at all exaggerated, similar to that of Berlin the morning after Hitler's demise. However, there had been no war here. There had not even been the urban disorders that had destroyed so much of south-central Los Angeles, the Woodward corridor in Detroit or portions of Washington, DC and Kansas City.



In 1975, the South Bronx was the most devastated urban landscape in the United States. The three community districts that comprise the core of the South Bronx had fallen 57 percent in population from 383,000 in 1970 to 166,000 in 1980, which has to rival the greatest short-term population loss in any urban setting.

The devastation of the South Bronx was government failure at its worst. Three factors stand out. The principal factors were mandatory school busing, which drove



SOUTH BRONX  
Corner of Charlotte Street and Boston Road  
Site of visits by President Jimmy Carter (1977) and  
Presidential Candidate Ronald Reagan (1980)



families with children away, the effects of rent control and, according to former Bronx borough President Herman Badillo, the “worst mistake of all,” construction of Co-op City in the northeastern section of the borough, which provided a large supply of new high-rise housing that did much to accelerate the exodus from the South Bronx. The beleaguered middle-income residents of the South Bronx were happy to take this additional inducement to leave.

The final blow came when fires devastated most of the buildings, sometimes due to random arson and sometimes due to planned arson as building owners sought to recover their investments through insurance claims.

Since that time, a resurrection has occurred in the South Bronx. New buildings have been built, generally at lower densities, including many detached houses. The principal drivers in this process were private foundations and community development corporations, with the assistance of government. The good news is that the South Bronx is back.<sup>12</sup> So is New York City, as is discussed below.



**Queens:** Queens developed later. Both Brooklyn and Queens have large expanses of high-rise residential areas.



Perhaps the most impressive are along Queens Boulevard, which ranks as one of the widest arterial streets (street with traffic signals) in the nation. However, due to its later development, Queens has a considerable volume of detached and semi-detached housing. Queens has the largest population of any New York's borough. Queens is also home to two of the three principal airports, JFK International and LaGuardia.

**Staten Island:** Staten Island (Richmond County) is across New York Bay from Manhattan and across the Verrazano Bridge from Brooklyn. Staten Island looks the least like the rest of New York. In terms of its urban form, much of Staten Island resembles adjacent New Jersey, which it is closer to than the rest of New York City. Much of Staten Island is single-family detached suburban housing, having been built in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, there is an older neighborhood on Staten Island, St. George, the terminus of the famous Staten Island Ferry, which operates from Lower Manhattan.

**Population Distribution:** The core counties of New York City and inner suburban New Jersey contain approximately one-half of the urban area population, while covering less than 15 percent of the urban land area (Table). This older development has a population density of 17,200 per square mile (6,600 per square kilometer). The balance of the urban area has a population density of 2,600, which is similar to the many suburbs of Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston or Portland.

**Employment Distribution:** Approximately 18 percent of the employment in the New York metropolitan area is in the Manhattan central business district (south of 59<sup>th</sup> Street). This figure usually surprises people, who perceive that most employment must be in the spectacular central business district with its unparalleled collection of skyscrapers. However, as the New York area has sprawled, jobs have followed the residences. Today, in 29 of the 30 counties, the majority of employees work in their home counties (Pike County, Pennsylvania being the exception). Those who work in the world's greatest expanse of sprawl also benefit from shorter travel times. The median work trip travel time (one way) for employees commuting to New York City is almost 39 minutes. This compares to an estimated 21 minutes in the suburban counties.

Manhattan has been and continues to be home to the largest share of major corporation headquarters in the United States. During the 1960s and 1970s, many of these companies relocated to the New Jersey, Westchester County and Connecticut suburbs, or out of the metropolitan area entirely.

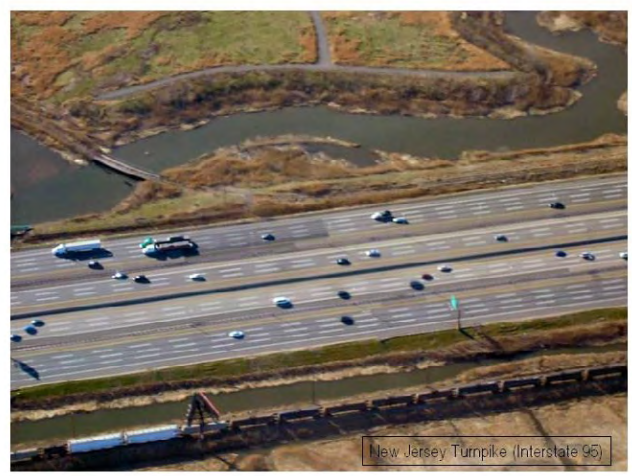
## Transport

**H**ighways: Despite its reputation for public transport, the New York urban area is comparatively well served by freeways. New York has 80 percent as many miles of freeways per square mile as Los Angeles.<sup>13</sup> Many of New York's freeways are parkways on which commercial traffic is prohibited. Some of these parkways were built by Robert Moses, who held powerful positions in the state of New York from the 1920s to the 1960s. Moses was also responsible for building some of the most important



Pulaski Skyway (IJS Routes 1 & 9), Built 1930s

water crossings in the city, such as the Verrazano Narrows Bridge (between Brooklyn and Staten Island) and the Triborough Bridge (between Manhattan, the Bronx and Queens) and a number of other crossings and roadways. Some of the Moses parkways were completed in the 1920s and 1930s and had full access control. It is likely that the first of these was the first freeway standard roadway in the nation, preceding the popularly credited Arroyo Seco Parkway (Pasadena Freeway) in Los Angeles by at least 10 years. The New York parkways exclude truck and bus traffic (the Pasadena Freeway excludes truck traffic).



New Jersey Turnpike (Interstate 95)

*Myth #3: The First Freeway was in Los Angeles: In fact, a number of freeways were in operation in the New York area, as fully accessed controlled parkways before the Arroyo Seco Parkway (Pasadena Freeway) in Los Angeles.*

A number of Hudson River crossings are owned by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. These include the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels and the George Washington Bridge, which connect New Jersey to Manhattan. The Bayonne and Goethels Bridges and Outerbridge Crossing link New Jersey with Staten Island.

The famous Brooklyn Bridge was completed in 1883 and was the longest suspension bridge in the world. The Brooklyn Bridge links Brooklyn to Manhattan, along with the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges and the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel. The 59<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge and the Queens-Midtown Tunnel connect Manhattan and Queens.

**Public Transport:** New York has, unquestionably, the most comprehensive public transport system in the United States. More than 40 percent of the nation's public transport ridership is in the New York urban area. Between its various operators, more than 7,000,000 daily trips are taken on public transport in the New York urban area. This includes percent of employee travel to the New York central business district.<sup>14</sup> The Brooklyn central business district attracts 58 percent of workers by public transport,<sup>15</sup> the second highest figure in the nation (more than Chicago's 55 percent).

Nearly all (95 percent) of this travel is within, to or from New York City. This means that nearly 40 percent of the nation's public transport is within or oriented to New York City, which represents approximately three percent of the nation's population and employment. Nearly all of this travel is on the New York subway (Metro), the three suburban rail systems, the PATH Metro system operating from New Jersey to Manhattan and express buses, which generally serve the Port Authority Bus Terminal at the end of Lincoln Tunnel in Manhattan.

The backbone of the New York public transport system is the Metro (subway), which provides comparatively intense service throughout the four highly urbanized boroughs (Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx). The subway includes stretches for nearly 250 miles (400 kilometers). Another Metro serves Lower Manhattan and Mid-Town Manhattan from Newark, Jersey City and Hoboken. This Port Authority owned system (PATH), like the New York Metro, lost a station in the World Trade Center destruction.

New York has three large suburban rail (commuter rail)



systems. The largest is the Metro North, owned by the states of New York and Connecticut and provides service from Grand Central Station on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Manhattan to the Hudson Valley and Connecticut suburbs and exurbs. The Long Island Railroad is owned by the state of New York and provides service from Penn Station, on 34<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan to the suburban communities of Nassau and Suffolk Counties as well as Brooklyn and Queens. The third suburban rail system is New Jersey Transit, which provides service from the New Jersey suburbs and exurbs to Penn Station.

There are a number of large bus operators as well, providing service throughout the urban area. The New Jersey private operators are especially notable, because they do not receive operating subsidies, yet they carry more annual travel than all public transport systems carry in all but eight metropolitan areas in the United States.

There is also an aerial tramway from Mid-Town Manhattan to Roosevelt Island in the East River. More recently, there has been a resurgence of ferry service across the Hudson River between New Jersey and Manhattan.

As important as it is to New York, public transport carries less than 10 percent of travel in the urban area. Cars carry the other more than 90 percent. Nonetheless, New York's public transport market share is more than double that of any other US urban area. By comparison, approximately 25 percent of Paris travel is on public transport, while nearly 60 percent of travel is on public transport in Tokyo-Yokohama and Osaka-Kobe-Kyoto.

**Intercity Rail:** New York is at the center of the nation's most highly populated corridor, with more people than the state of California. In the approximately 500 miles between Washington and Boston, there were 42 million people in 2000. This creates a natural corridor for intercity rail. Relatively rapid service is provided between Washington and New York, while the train to Boston, substantially improved, averages less than 70 miles per hour (110 kilometers per hour). There are a number of problems with these services, from overly expensive work rules and the bureaucracy of Amtrak, the government owned intercity rail company, to the fact that the service shares track with both suburban rail systems and freight trains. For high speed rail to be effective in this corridor would require privatization (a competitive cost structure) and the development of a new passenger only corridor. The special interest infected American political system is unlikely to allow privatization to happen. Moreover, the costs of a new corridor would be prohibitive. As a result, most travel between the largest urban areas in the corridor is by plane or car.

**Myth #4: California has the highest concentration of**

**population in the nation.** While California is, by far, the most populace state, its concentration of population is far less than in the Northeast Corridor, which runs from Washington DC, through New York to Boston. In 2000, metropolitan areas in the Northeast Corridor<sup>16</sup> contained nearly 42 million people, approximately one-quarter more than California. The Northeast Corridor metropolitan areas cover slightly more than one-fifth of the land area of California (where the population is also highly concentrated in the Los Angeles, San Francisco and San Diego areas).

**Airports:** New York has three principal airports, all owned and operated by the Port Authority of New Jersey and New York. Most international flights operate out of John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in Queens. JFK is an aging jumble of unsuccessful architecture. Every terminal appears to have been designed by an architect interested in making a unique statement, all of which ends in a cacophony of design. The worst is Terminal 5, the former Trans World Airline (TWA) terminal, designed by Eero Saarinen and built in the 1960s. The TWA terminal was beloved by many architectural critics, most of whom probably spent little time in this customer unfriendly environment. There were the ceilings in the boarding area not much higher than that of the average basement finished after completion of the house. There were the sterile walkways to the boarding areas. There was the air conditioning system modeled on that of the Paris Metro (which has no air conditioning).



The former TWA terminal is currently undergoing renovation. Demolition would be more appropriate. Some of the baggage claim areas at JFK are dimly lit and middle-income world in appearance. They can call it JFK International all they want, but JFK is not an international class airport, at least in its passenger amenities.

To its credit, JFK has a modern new rail distributor



system, perhaps illustrating the most successful type of application for high capacity rail. The system was built with passenger facility fees (user fees on air tickets), a funding source that builds virtually all airports in the United States. The rail system provides service between the nine terminals. Most unusually, however, the system provides service to stations outside the airport, including the car rental area (Federal Circle), the New York Metro, at the Howard Beach station and the Long Island Railroad at Jamaica. Travel is free and the Jamaica branch in particular provides a good view of the detached and semi-detached housing that is typical of this part of Queens. Large park-and-ride lots are provided at three stations.

Queens is also home to LaGuardia Airport, which principally handles domestic traffic. The third airport is Newark Liberty International, located in Newark, New Jersey. Newark International served as New York's only airport until Mayor Fiorio LaGuardia pulled a publicity stunt in the late 1930s. At that time, New York was served only Newark Airport. LaGuardia refused to leave a plane after landing in Newark, noting that Newark is not New York. This led to building LaGuardia Airport. Like JFK, LaGuardia is aging and looks more appropriate for a middle-income world nation than a high-income nation. Newark is a bit more modern, but taken together there are probably not three other airports in the nation with passenger areas so untidy.

## The Resurgence of New York City

The years between the late 1960s and the early 1990s were not kind to New York. The city was overrun by crime and was in clear decline. Nearly 1,000,000 of the

population was lost. A significant turnaround occurred in the middle to late 1990s, which has been principally credited to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, whose tough anti-crime policies restored order to much of the city. At the same time, New York City continued to receive a strong flow of foreign immigrants and new ethnic neighborhoods developed, especially in the outer boroughs (outside Manhattan).

However, New York faces a new threat. Largely because of public policy driven artificial land shortages, housing affordability has plummeted in the New York metropolitan area. In 2005, the median multiple (median house price divided by median household income) had reached 7.9, well above the 3.0 typical of a healthy market. As late as 1995, New York's median multiple was 3.6. The problem is all manner of restrictions that have been imposed on suburban development, such as outright development bans, requirements for far larger building lots than is necessary or economic and programs that require builders to provide "affordable" housing units when they build. All of these factors raise the price of housing. Where these policies have not been adopted, such as the fast growing markets of Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston, the median multiple remains below the historic 3.0 figure. The loss of housing affordability is doubtless a major factor in the strong out migration trends that have already been noted in New York. In fact, a *New York Times* report recently indicated that Philadelphia was receiving net migration from New York. This is probably the first time this has occurred since before the US Constitutional Convention (1787).

What will New York be in 50 years? There is no doubt that it will continue to be one of the world's largest urban areas. The question is whether it will remain as one of perhaps the world's top three in commercial influence, along with Tokyo-Yokohama and London. Will it even remain in the top 10? The challenges are great. Other urban areas are rising fast, such as Shanghai, Shenzhen and Seoul. New York's commercial pre-eminence, even in the United States, is not necessarily secure. It is no longer physically necessary for so much of the world's financial activity to be concentrated in Manhattan, as the rise of Jersey City and the dispersion of information technology indicate. One thing is sure, however. A New York that is not bleeding domestic migrants will be healthier and more important than one that is.



## References

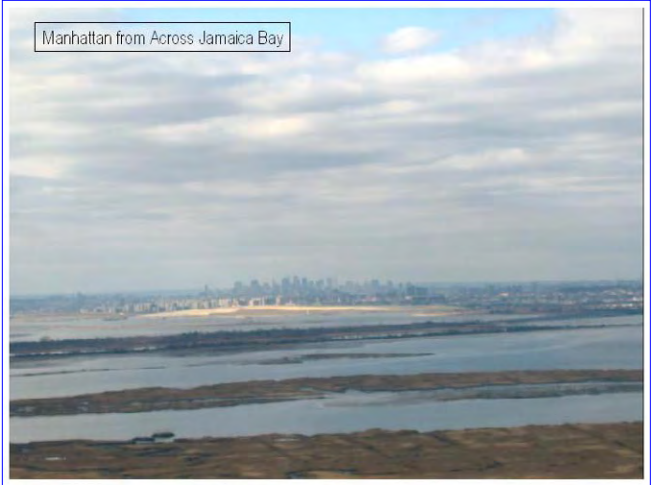
1. See Tokyo Rental Car Tour, <http://www.demographia.com/rac-tokyo.pdf>.
  2. List of world megacities: <http://www.demographia.com/db-megacity-2005.htm>.
  3. See listing of world urban areas, <http://www.demographia.com/db-worldua.pdf>.
  4. See Jakarta Rental Car Tour, <http://www.rentalcartours.net/rac-jakarta.pdf>.
  5. See Delhi Rental Car Tour, <http://www.rentalcartours.net/rac-delhi.pdf>.
  6. See Mumbai rental Car Tour, <http://www.rentalcartours.net/rac-mumbai.pdf>.
  7. There are similar difficulties in the San Francisco area, the Bureau of the Census separates the contiguous San Jose urbanization into an urban area and in Los Angeles, where the Bureau of the Census separates the contiguous urbanization of Riverside-San Bernardino and Mission Viejo into urban areas.
  8. The Demographia urban area includes the New York, Bridgeport (CT), New Haven (CT), Danbury (CT), Hightstown (NJ) and Trenton (NJ) urban areas.
  9. <http://www.demographia.com/db-intlcbddens.htm>.
  10. <http://www.demographia.com/db-nyc-ward1800.htm>.
  11. Excluding the peripheral parks (Vincennes and Bolougne).
  12. See South Bronx Resurrection, Rental Car Tour: <http://www.rentalcartours.net/rac-sbronx.pdf>.
  13. <http://www.publicpurpose.com/ut-4colfwy.htm>.
  14. <http://www.demographia.com/db-cbd2000.pdf>.
  15. <http://www.demographia.com/db-nyc-employ.pdf>.
  16. Includes Washington-Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Hartford, Springfield (MA, New London (CT), Providence and Boston.
- For more information, see:
- <http://www.rentalcartours.net>  
<http://www.demographia.com>  
<http://www.publicpurpose.com>

## Additional Photos

View to Manhattan from Raritan River, New Jersey



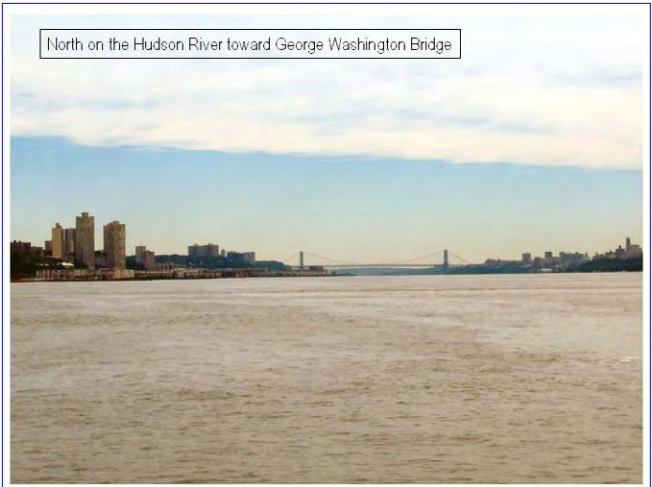
Manhattan from Across Jamaica Bay



Hudson River:  
Lower Manhattan on Left  
Jersey City on Right



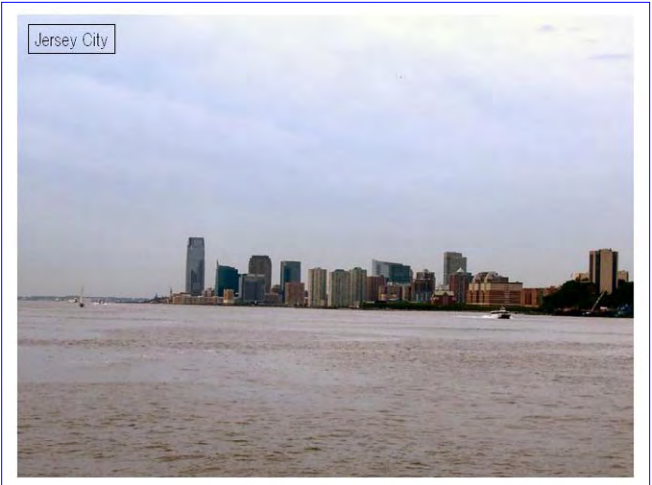
North on the Hudson River toward George Washington Bridge



Lower Manhattan



Jersey City



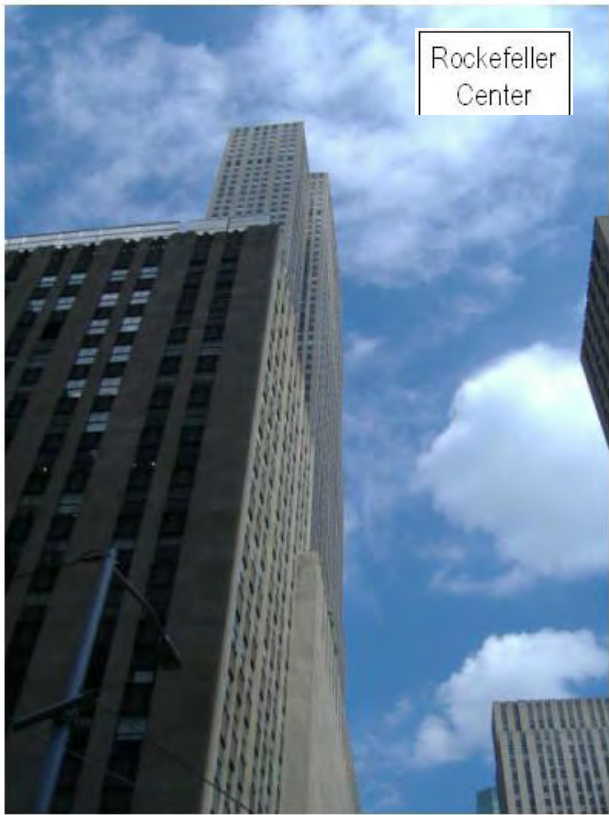




Lower Manhattan



5th Avenue



Rockefeller Center



Flatiron Building





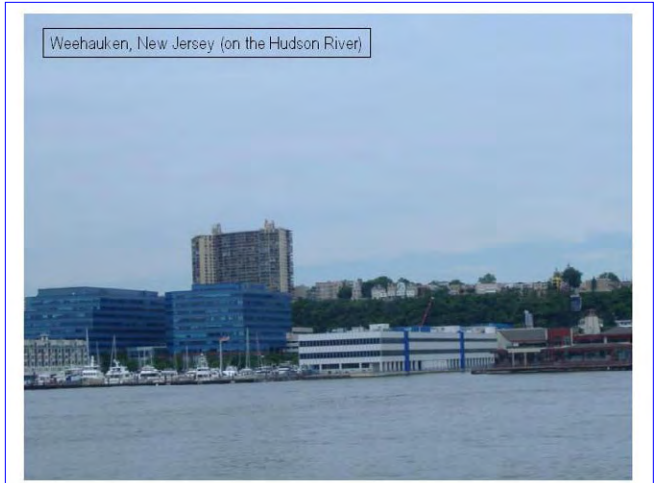
Amtrak Entry to Penn Station



South Bronx



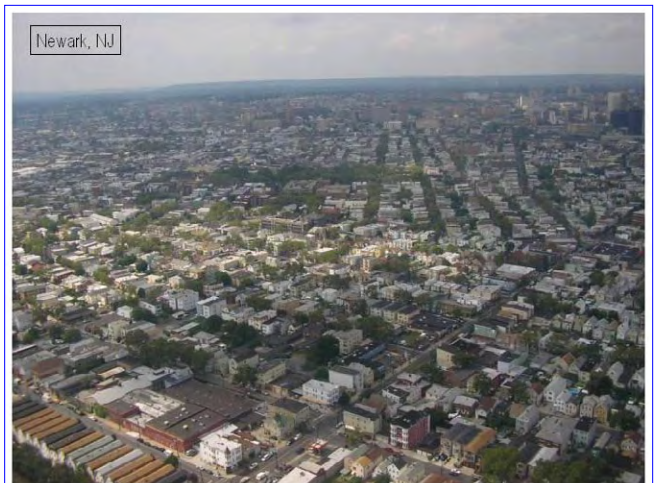
South Bronx



Weehauken, New Jersey (on the Hudson River)

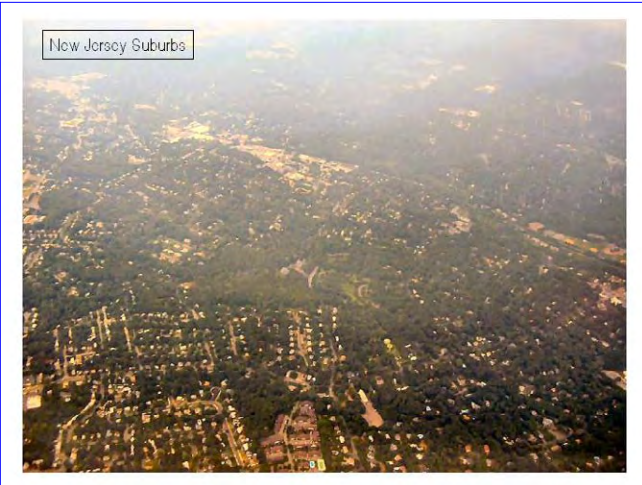
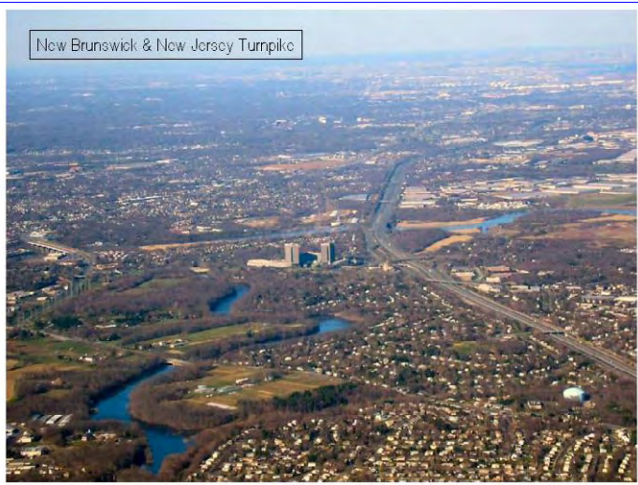
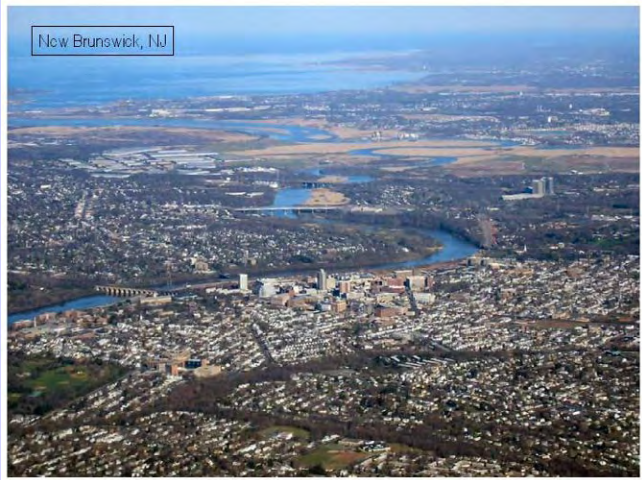


Oil Refinery, Elizabeth, NJ

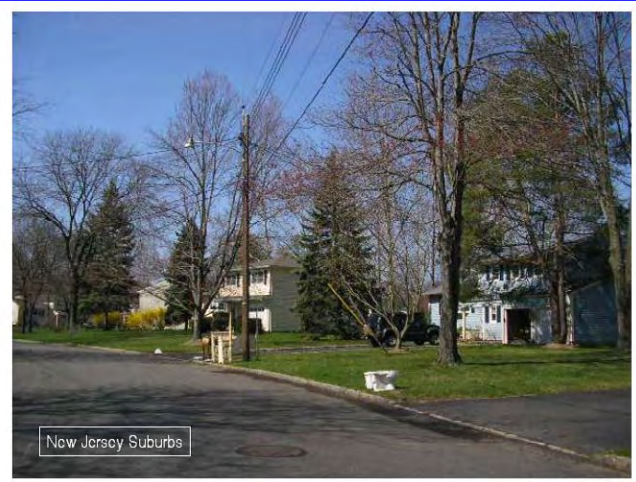
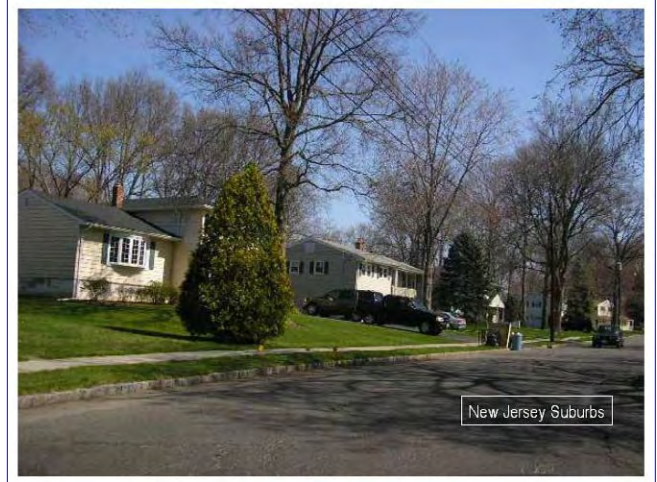


Newark, NJ

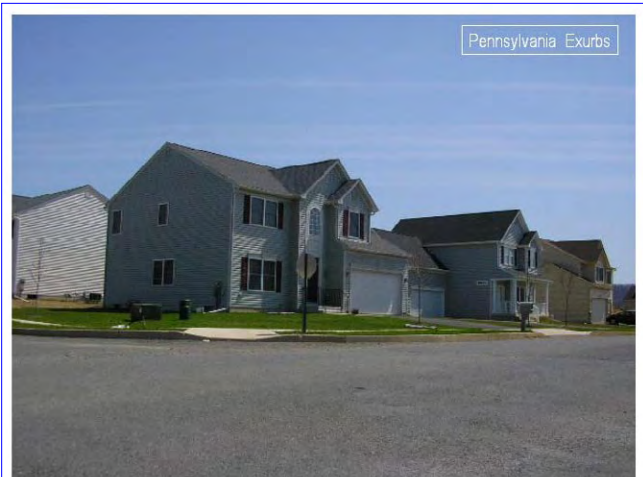




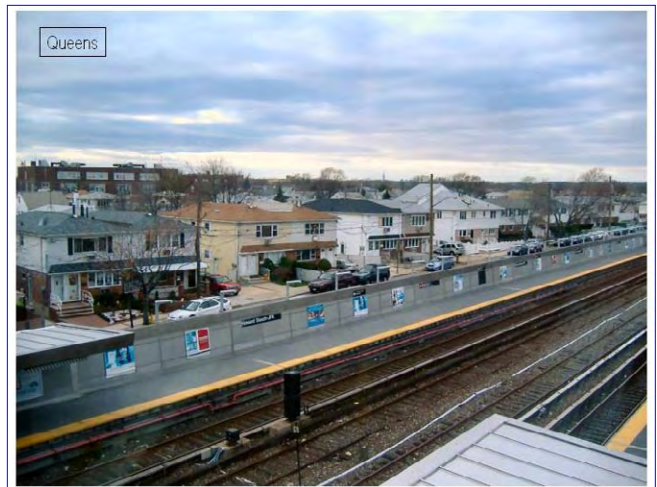
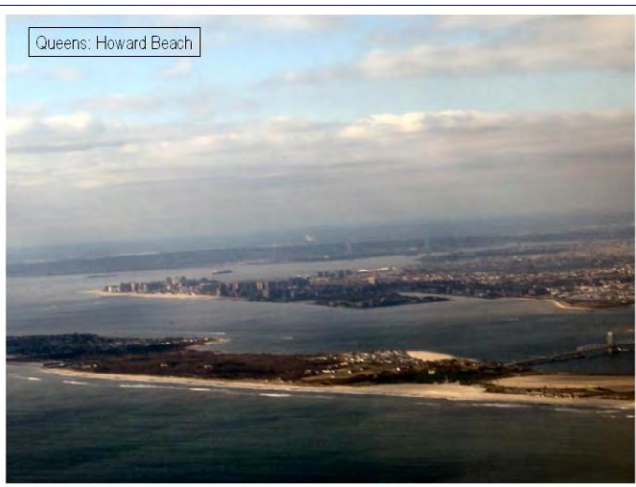
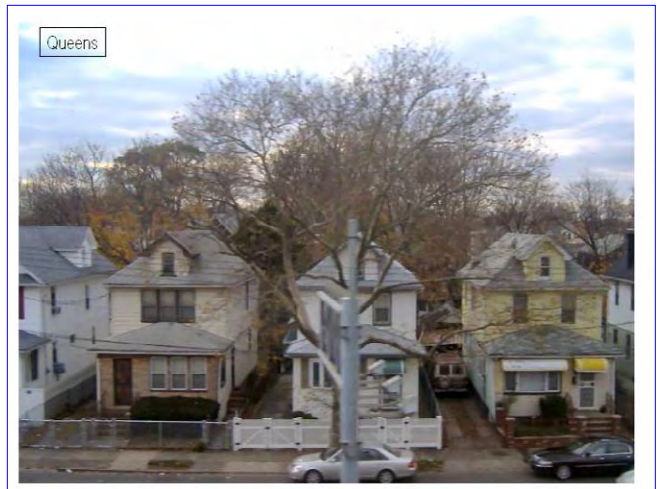
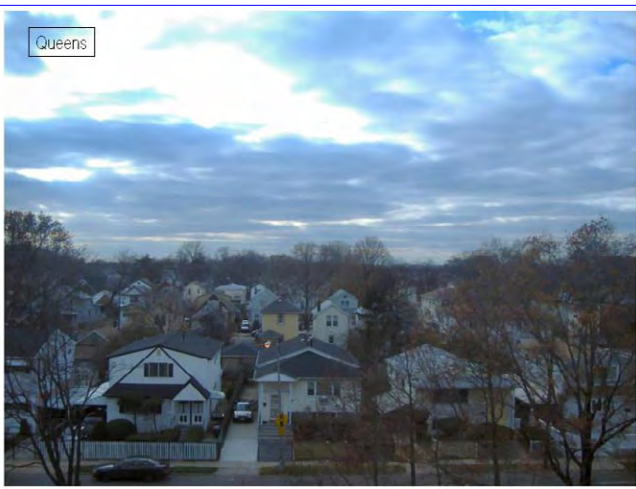
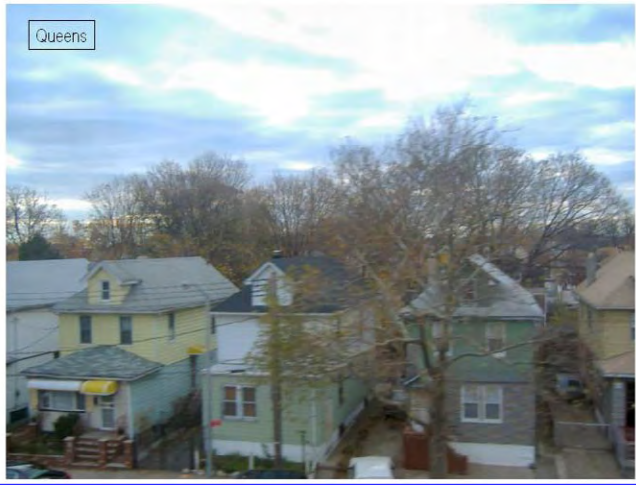














## Urban Tours by Rental Car: About the Series

*Urban Tours by Rental Car* offers perspectives on urban development obtained by automobile tours through urban areas. Rental cars are not the favored method for visiting cities, especially those outside one's own country. Instead, tourists and urban planners favor packaged tours or local public transport systems. Both are splendid ways for seeing the city as it used to be --- the very reason for most tourist visits. The historical core areas contain monuments, prime government and religious edifices and quaint neighborhoods that are often centuries old. This is particularly important to tourists from the newer urban areas of the American, Canadian or Australian West, where history extends not far before World War II. It is further understandable that few tourists travel thousands of miles to see the newer suburban areas that look very much like home. But most tourists do not profess to be students of the urban area.

For the urban planner interested in understanding the whole urban area, it is not enough to study the core alone, regardless of its architectural attractiveness, romanticism, history or affirmation of an individually preferred life style. No one, regardless of the depth of their education can develop reliable conceptions from an unrepresentative sample, and urban cores are the very essence of unrepresentative samples. Both public transport and packaged tours miss the larger part --- the expanse of sprawling residential and business development that rings virtually all major urban areas. They may be of little interest to many urban planners, but they should be.

Stripping away regional architectural facades, one might as well be in the suburbs of Phoenix, Portland, Perth or Paris. Here, the automobile is king, because no public transport system has been developed that can effectively serve destinations outside the core (at least at a price any society can afford). While public transport market shares are higher in European suburban areas than in the New World, much of the difference is attributable to lower incomes and less automobile access. Indeed, public transport's principal weakness, lack of automobile competitiveness, is itself a contributing factor to the rising motorization occurring from the suburbs of Copenhagen and Nagoya to the suburbs of Lagos and Mumbai. To oversimplify this phenomenon as being a "love affair with the automobile" is the equivalent of saying that Singaporeans or Brazilians have a love affair with air conditioning. Human beings prefer comfort to discomfort and they prefer free time to time over which they have no control.

It is no wonder that tourists return to the United States thinking that all Paris looks like the second arrondissement (less than one percent does) and that urban planners think all of Milan looks like the architectural treasures that surround the Cathedral. In fact, the sprawling suburbs of Europe, Japan, Canada and Connecticut resemble one another in many ways. For any seeking to study the urban area in its entirety --- not just the favored haunts of core-dwelling elites --- there is no alternative to "getting behind the wheel." Thus, "urban tours by rental car."