

The overall needs of the 21st century city society differ from those of the late 20th century with economic and social changes due to globalization, the birth of a knowledge-based economy, and the gender equality of the workforce. The global economy requires intellectually skilled and technologically adept service workers. The emergence of service industries as a primary source of wealth production has changed the characteristics of the workforce from task based to knowledge based. Society has become increasingly mobile, cutting across barriers of language and culture. Competition for wealth producing talent crosses national and international borders. Approximately 150 different ethnic groups comprise almost half of the population of New York City. Whatever their country of origin, talented people are drawn to New York City, like other global cities, where they find a synergy of common personal and professional interests and complementary skills that allow them to achieve their personal goals.

However, perhaps the most important change from the viewpoint of land use is the percentage of women in the workplace. Women now comprise 46% of the American workforce (Hudson Institute, 1997). Two-wage families total 55%. Women now garner 55% of bachelor degrees, 53% of masters degrees, and nearly 40% of doctorates (Hudson Institute, 1997). Women's ownership of small businesses escalated from 5% in the 1970s to 38% in the 1990s (Small Business Administration, 1998). Approximately 64% of all married women in the workforce today have children of less than 6 years of age (Hudson Institute, 1997). Land-use patterns must fit the needs of today's working women, who still perform most of the household duties in addition to their paid work.

Concurrently, these changes together with other factors, such as a plethora of global unskilled workers and the rapidly widening gap between lower and upper incomes, create and perpetuate an underclass. The city must absorb into its overall fabric the disadvantaged groups spawned by all of these changes. Additionally, other factors are affecting how workers live and work. Many have rejected the 2–4 hours lost in daily commuting and have decided to live in the city near their work. Live and work is now commonplace, if not full-time, at least part-time.

Overall these factors strongly suggest the strengthening of neighbourhood so that all of the elements of daily living (retail services, personal services, schools, playgrounds, health

care, etc.) are conveniently located within walking distance and all incomes are intermixed.

Vision for the future

It is worth noting that since 1922, nine master plans have been developed for Manhattan. Seven were developed by civic organizations, some in collaboration with the city's planning department. None has ever been adopted. New York City does not have a master plan. However, the widespread damage of Lower Manhattan below Canal Street has offered an opportunity to create a vision of Lower Manhattan based on humane values and a 21st century lifestyle.

New York City is organically clustered into neighbourhood nodes, each with its own identity.

Lower Manhattan presently comprises several and distinctly different neighbourhoods such as the historic financial centre around Wall Street, the residential area of Battery Park City, TriBeCa, South Street Seaport, and Chinatown. These neighbourhoods need new land uses, changes in urban form, transportation and connections to each other, the region and the world in a sustainable manner. Past and present market-driven forces typically form neighbourhoods. Rebuilding requires an understanding of what motivates people and businesses to create their neighbourhood, for public investment to then shape neighbourhood node development.

The R.Dot coalition's objective is to support an imaginative design that creates the possibility of an inclusive, 24-hour residential and business community. It is necessary that the built environment attracts and serves people who provide the intellectual, entrepreneurial, creative, and technological capabilities that empower New York City's society, its economy and the richness of its multi-cultural life. On behalf of R.Dot, the author developed a set of criteria based on the principles of livability and sustainability expounded in her earlier writings (Artigiani, 2002; Civic Alliance to Rebuild Downtown New York, 2002; Oppenheimer and Willis, 2002; Willis, 2002; Willis and Kossler, 2003; Willis and Raimone, 2003). Further position papers about neighbourhoods and housing, and about sustainability and health are currently scheduled for publication.