



In the wake of the World Trade Center tragedy and the destruction it caused to much of Lower Manhattan, our profession has an unprecedented opportunity to shape the future of the City. Much current thinking before September 11 had focused on expanding major new development beyond the traditional hubs of Downtown and Midtown. This concept has acquired a new sense of urgency. A symposium had already been planned and this column written before the attack occurred.

Once upon a time, there was a booming human settlement comprised of a series of towns and villages scattered among parts of three islands and two peninsulas adjacent to the harbor of New York. Because of the success of these towns and the burgeoning economy of the area, there was a movement to consolidate. In 1898, the communities of Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island (then Richmond) united to become the country's first metropolis—a dynamic, collaborative economic, political, and social venture.

New York City's economy, its institutions, its culture, and its people have become pre-eminent in the world. But the city has become a victim of its own success. The boom and its benefits have in recent years been concentrated largely in Manhattan, often to the detriment of the island's sister boroughs and now also to the detriment of Manhattan itself. At the start of this new century, we are searching for ways to accommodate continued growth and more equitably distribute benefits. The obvious solution is to look again at a decentralized model.

To promote this new model for fostering social, cultural, and economic growth throughout the city, the AIA New York Chapter is hosting an all-day symposium on November 16. One=Five: Creating a Multi-Centered City is the inaugural event of the Chapter's Center for Architecture at Baruch College's new vertical campus on Lexington Avenue and 25th Street. We are very pleased to bring together many thinkers and to promote dialogue about the form and implementation of a new multi-centered model.

The symposium will examine initiatives across the five boroughs of our city, which are intended to leverage future development of neighborhoods, commercial districts, and cultural nodes. We'll address the Bronx Center Plan of 1993, which was a framework for commercial, cultural, and sports development in the center of the borough. We'll hear about the Brooklyn Academy of Music Local Development Corporation's plan for arts-based neighborhood redevelopment including a major new arts library. In Manhattan, we'll talk about the development of the far West Side, and hear about a study that proposes a focus on high-tech businesses rather than a stadium. In Queens, we'll examine the Long Island City mixed-use redevelopment effort, including the Van Alen Institute's competition and the Queens West waterfront redevelopment, including a major new project by Architectonica. In Staten Island, we'll take a look at the St. George Terminal Redevelopment Area, including Eisenman Architects' museum project and HOK Sport's minor league baseball stadium. For each panel, there will be a mix of speakers from the public and private sectors, planners, and architects.

As architects and as citizens of New York we must insist on intelligent citywide planning and promote the concept of a multi-centered city. Because I consider this subject to be of such critical importance to the future success and livability of our city, the symposium is my presidential initiative for 2001. I hope to see a sell-out crowd.



Nathaniel H. Brooks

Long Island City