

## **The Dynamic Metropolis**

### **Second Assignment**

#### *Short Paper: Report on Urban Problem-Solving*

#### Overview

Urban Studies as a field often deals not just with the analysis of conditions in cities, but also with the wide range of ways that people have attempted to deal with the challenges posed by those conditions. Urban problem-solving is one of the key routes of creative engagement with the city, and it is not just the province of policy makers or planners or politicians, though they are important in the story. Such engagements also involve artists, architects, writers, musicians, performers, philosophers, social workers, business owners, developers, community advocates, grass roots organizations--and all of us to one degree or another as citizens of the metropolis.

#### The Project

In this second assignment, you will report on a creative response to a specific urban issue undertaken by a non-profit organization, city agency, community group, or individual. The issue can be connected to the area you explored in your group project, though this is not required. The reports should describe and analyze the issue in the broader urban contexts within which it persists, and assess the creative approach taken. The issues can range among any that we have studied in class--from poverty and inequality to immigration, transportation, networked infrastructures, globalization, adaptive reuse of old buildings, public space, social relations, or the design of housing and other urban functions. The approaches that you study may vary--from municipal policy and planning to art-making practices, architectural design, grass roots organizing, musical innovation, social programs, or a combination. In all cases, the goal is to expand our understanding of the great range of problem-solving engagements with the city.

#### Elements of the Presentation

You will convey your report on urban problem-solving through a paper of 4-5 pages (min/max). The text should describe the problem and its dimensions, the organization that you have chosen to examine, and the approaches taken by the organization to confront the challenge. The paper must be coherently organized with clear, concise prose, a minimum of verbiage, and a logical narrative flow. Be sure to use an outline to organize your ideas, and to edit your work carefully.

Papers may include supplemental materials such as maps, images, charts, tables, and other graphics as needed. Any such inclusions should be accompanied by a caption with explanation and attribution of the source. These materials, along with any citations and bibliographic entries, should be placed at the end of the paper as an appendix, and are not part of the 4-5 pages of text.