

**SEED THE QUEENSWAY!**  
*Cultivating Economy & Ecology*

Queensway Connection: Elevating the Public Realm  
2014 ENYA Ideas Competition

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ARCH 686 Essay  
Claire Lubell

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## The Competition

The Queensway Connection competition is the 2014 version of an annual competition supported by the Emerging New York Architects Committee (ENYA) and the AIA New York Chapter. Each year the competition addresses a specific site in one of the five boroughs where much needed development has strong socio-economic challenges but also incredible opportunity to create community impact at both the local and regional scale (Fig 1). The Queensway is a 3.5 mile abandoned stretch of railway running through a complex mix of residential, commercial and recreational zones that used to form a portion of the Long Island Railroad's connection from Manhattan to Rockaway Beach (Fig 2). While the site of this ideas competition, the Queensway is also currently the focus a feasibility study funded by the State of New York, facilitated by the Friends of the Queensway and the Trust for Public Land, and carried out by WXY architecture + urban design and dlandstudio. According to ENYA "the key to making the Queensway a success is to engage the local community and to empower them to take ownership of the disused infrastructure. If nearby community groups, businesses and residents were allowed to 'adopt' portions of the railway, the result would be a park whose usefulness was truly defined by the will of the community."<sup>1</sup> This statement makes clear the overarching intentions of the competition and identifies it as a contextually specific challenge, rather than an iteration of the High Line in Queens. Our project, **Seed the Queensway**, therefore seeks to be both reflective and projective, without being highly speculative, so as to put forth a proposal that could be relevant and have critical impact at both architectural and urban scales.

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<sup>1</sup> ENYA competition brief, <<http://www.enyacompitions.org/2014/>>

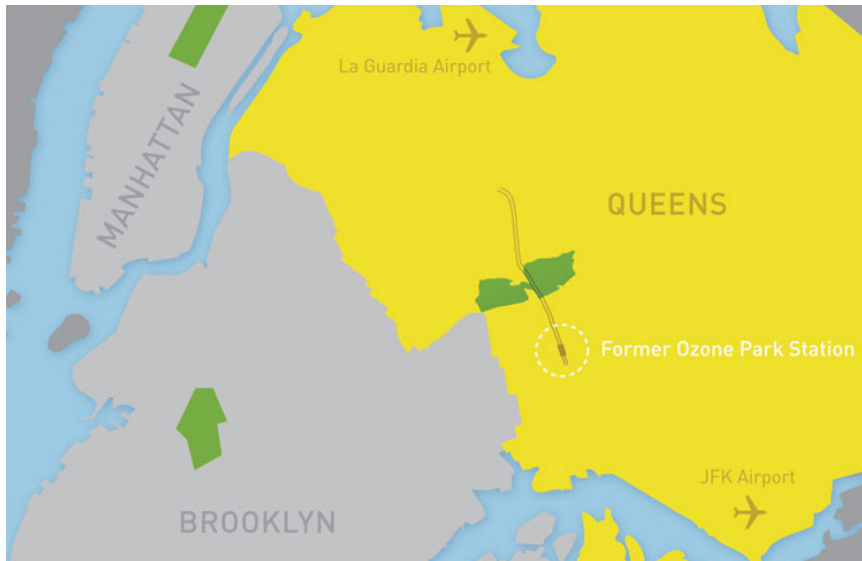


Figure 1  
NYC Context Map

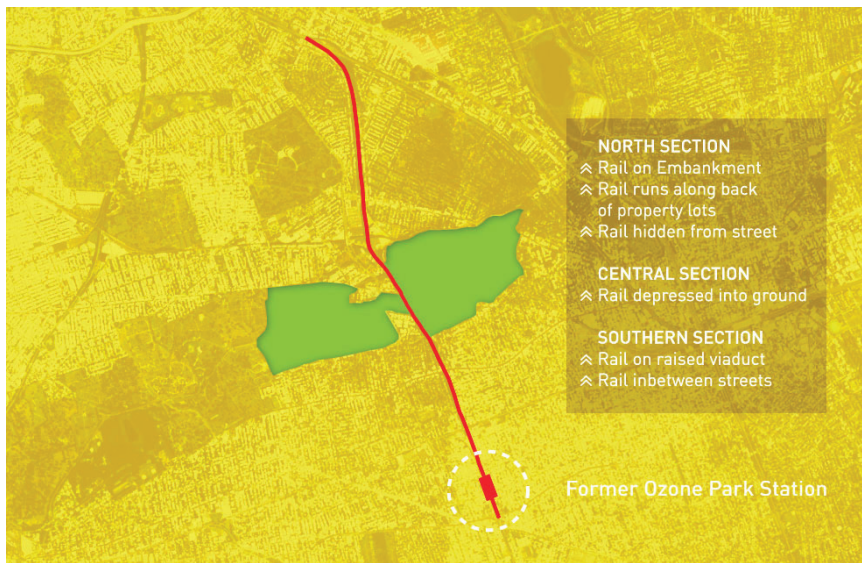


Figure 2  
Map of Queensway

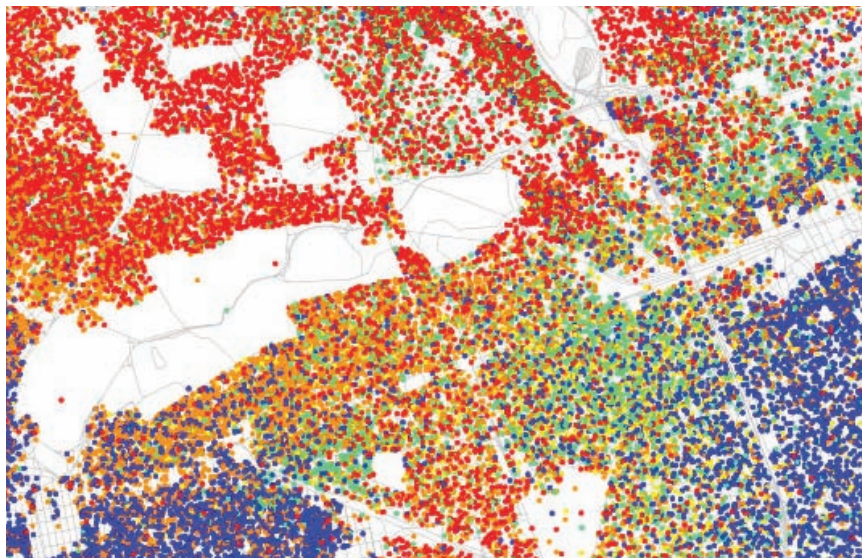


Figure 3  
Map of Ethnic Diversity

■ White	■ Black
■ Asian	■ Hispanic
■ Other	

*each dot represents 25 people*

## The Site

Though set within the context of the entire Queensway, the ENYA competition requested proposals to imagine a future for the site of the Ozone Park Station (Fig 4,5,6). Ozone Park Station had been an important junction on the Rockaway Beach line to transfer from trains originating at Penn Station or Flatbush Ave. The early sections of the Rockaway Beach line were built in 1877 with the length completed in the 1920s but by the 1940s it was beginning to fall victim to high maintenance costs. The last train to run from Flatbush Ave to Aqueduct Raceway via the Ozone Park Station interchange was in 1955 and the last LIRR train to run on the Rockaway Beach line was in 1962.<sup>2</sup> The southern portion of the Queensway is an elevated viaduct that passes through a dense, low rise residential area and though there is vehicular access on either side, the leased occupation of the underside by auto body shops, contractors and distribution businesses which require large storage facilities has turned an otherwise porous structure into an impenetrable mass. There is a good deal of activity on the site but it caters primarily to automobiles and has no strong public urban presence (Fig 9,10). The abandoned infrastructure has become a divisive boundary in the neighbourhood with no opportunity for public occupation whereas the Ozone Park Station site could become a civic connection to the broader urban region given its proximity to two NYC subway stations. By soliciting proposals for this site in particular, the competition makes clear the opportunity to create a model community hub (Fig 7). ENYA listed its selection criteria as:<sup>3</sup>

- pedestrian/cyclist welcoming vertical transition
- program strategy to encourage community engagement
- economical use of the existing infrastructure
- consideration for existing tenants
- incorporation of ecologically sustainable elements

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2 LIRR Rockaway Beach Branch Virtual Tour, <<http://oldnyc.com/rockaway/contents/rockaway.html>>

3 ENYA competition brief, <<http://www.enyacompitions.org/2014/>>

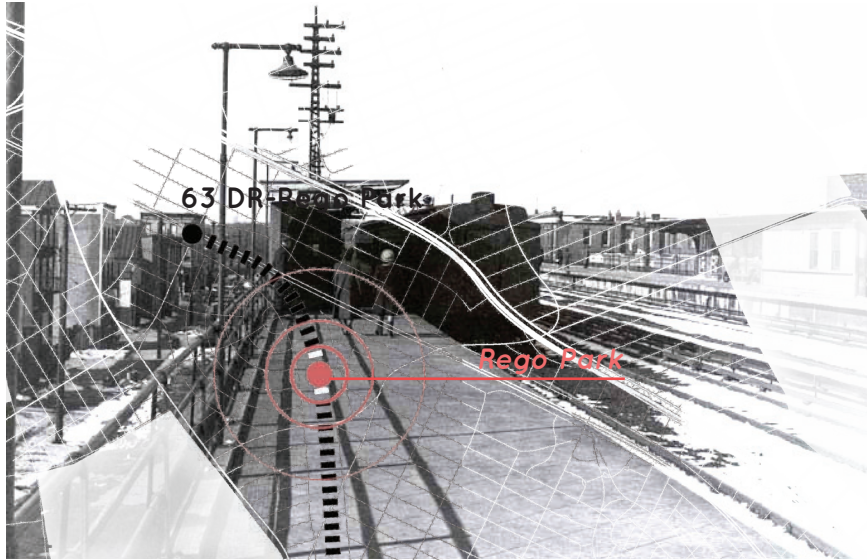


Figure 4  
Ozone Park Station 1948



Figure 5  
Ozone Park Station 1962

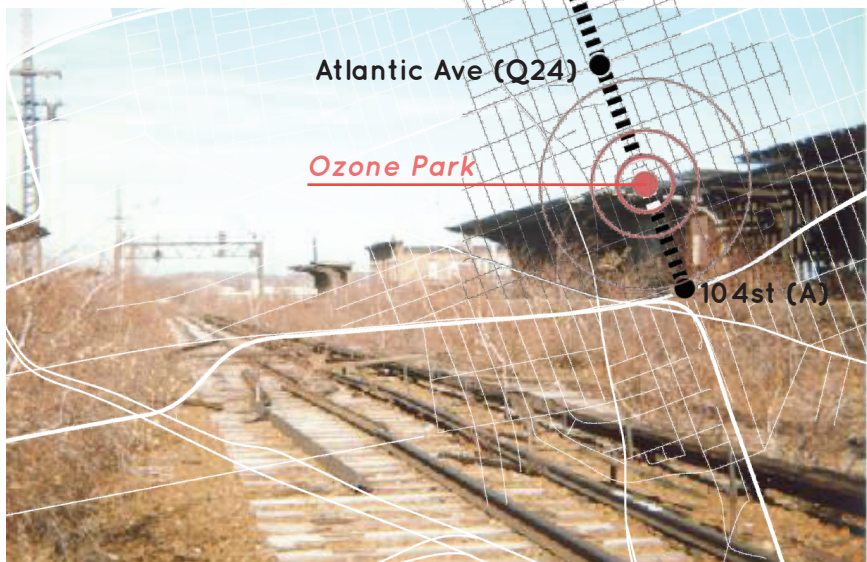
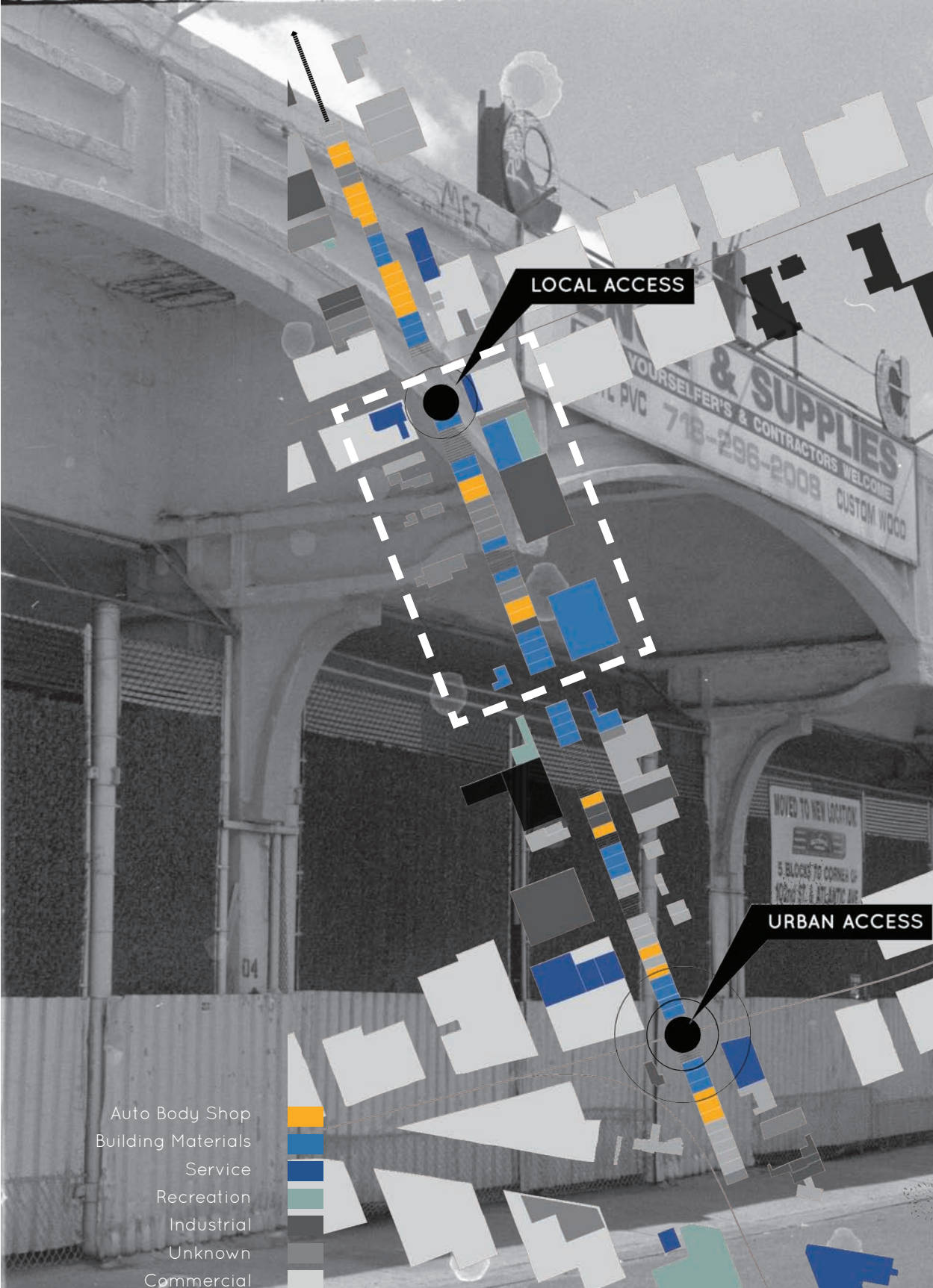


Figure 6  
Ozone Park Station 1988

Figure 7 (overlay)  
Potential location of  
community hubs along  
Queensway and lateral  
connections to NYC transit



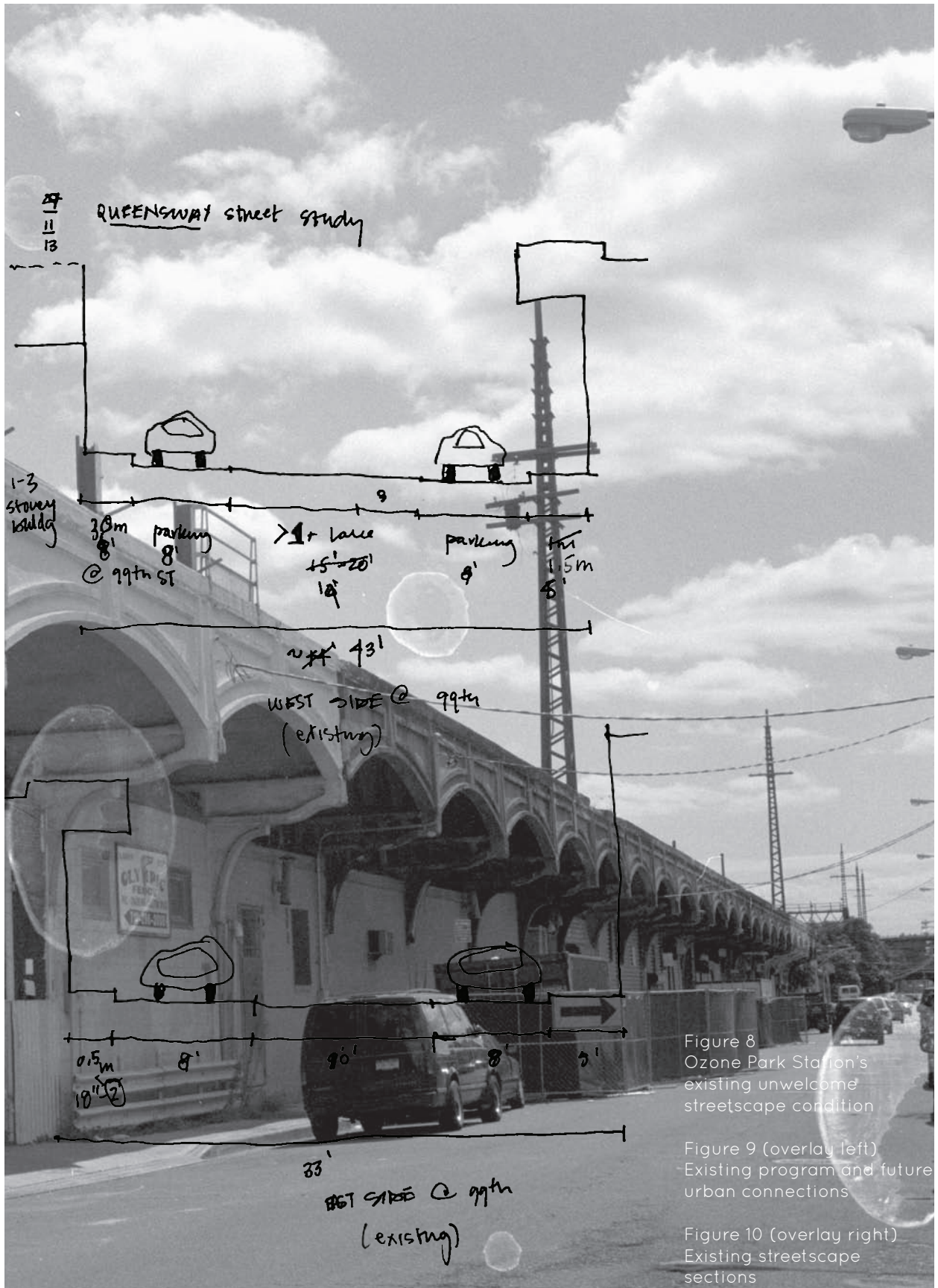


Figure 8  
Ozone Park Station's  
existing unwelcome  
streetscape condition

Figure 9 (overlay left)  
Existing program and future  
urban connections

Figure 10 (overlay right)  
Existing streetscape  
sections

## The Theoretical Inspiration

*“In natural ecologies, borders are the zones in a habitat where organisms become more inter-active, due to the meeting of different species or physical conditions. The boundary is a limit; a territory beyond a particular species does stray. So these are two different kinds of edge. For instance, in the border-edge where the shoreline of a lake meets solid land there is an active zone of exchange; here is where organisms find and feed off other organisms. The same is true of temperature layers within a lake: where layer meets layer defines the zone of the most intense biological activity. Whereas the boundary is a guarded territory, as established by prides of lions or packs of wolves.”<sup>4</sup>*

The principle guiding the design of *Seed the Queensway* is founded in an understanding of the potential of infrastructure to catalyse the public realm and, subsequently, an understanding of the public realm as relying on open systems to flourish. In his essay “The Public Realm,” Richard Sennett distinguishes the open system as one of “unstable evolution” as opposed to the closed system which is one of “harmonious equilibrium”. While the later may sound desirable it in fact produces a stagnant system while the former has “structures to respond to uncertainty and coordinate change”.<sup>5</sup> The public realm is a place for the meeting of strangers and the expansion of knowledge for which stagnation is dangerously counterproductive. This becomes particularly critical in neighbourhoods like Ozone Park which have an exceptional ethnic diversity where no one group is dominant (Fig 3). The primary characteristic of the closed system is the over-determination of form which is rigid and therefore does not have the necessary flexibility to adapt to changing conditions. The Queensway has become a closed system despite the fact that it is not an over-determined form and has the capacity to adapt to

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4 Richard Sennett, “The Public Realm”, <<http://www.richardsennett.com/site/SENN/Templates/General2.aspx?pageid=16>>

5 Ibid.



the metamorphosis of the urban condition. The challenge then becomes how to open up the closed system to return it to a state of greatest potential. One of Sennett's key spatial distinctions between an open and closed system is the notion of the border versus the boundary. By dividing rather than relating, the boundary condition leads to the stagnation so dangerous to fostering an active public realm. The border, on the other hand, facilitates exposure to difference and forces groups to decide the extent to which they will relate. This means that borders can also be zones of conflict. The border, as opposed to the boundary, is for Sennett analogous to the cell membrane; a porous yet resistant interface of friction where interaction and occupation is negotiated.

*Seed the Queensway* positions the existing urban infrastructure as a border zone of active engagement where, by seeding new opportunities for economic and ecological development, an abandoned infrastructure begins to generate collective social space. The proposal is a strategic framework, not a masterplan, that operates at both the architectural and urban scale by activating connections, providing support and fostering agency (Fig 11,12). This framework is developed around the three strategies of connectivity, support and agency.

**Connectivity**\_Community activation nodes are seeded between transit access locations to initiate a radiating occupation and gradual linking of neighbourhoods (Fig 7). The framework proposes a distributed and locally calibrated strategy of growth, rather than phasing, to promote community appropriation of the Queensway. The currently impenetrable mass of the structure is carved away to create exterior covered spaces and pedestrian passageways. Openings are cut in the deck to allow for light penetration and vertical access, creating an interwoven circulation system. Meanwhile the vehicular focused

street is re-calibrated to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle movement, connecting it to its immediate context. Once made accessible, the structure welcomes public activity, encouraging interaction between businesses, residents, and visitors alike.

**Support\_** Implementing the fundamental physical and strategic frameworks ensures continuing development and adaptation of the Queensway over time. A simple and repetitive structural system supports incremental building and varied use of space while integrating service and utility within allows for increased flexibility of occupation. At the ecological level, the existing self-seeded landscape is complemented by selective zones of cultivation and supplementary planting to generate a diverse, urban ecological corridor. The same framing that supports utility distribution also provides structural bracing for both the existing platform and vertical growth of vegetation.

**Agency\_** Embedding opportunities for both individual and collective occupation ensures that the Queensway become a stable social infrastructure for diverse groups. Integrated social and economic programs encourage community learning and appropriation as existing business are supplemented with new commerce and public amenities. Catalysing public events and offering short term small business subsidization can help create a more robust local economy. The adjacent communities are strengthened by understanding each of their nodes as a multifaceted object with complex spaces of porosity that enable programmatic diversity and flexible activity.

These three seeding strategies and their respective steps are intended to provide the framework for a strategic planning process which engages local and regional stakeholders in order to ensure a sustainable project.

seed packet

# CONNECTIVITY

initiates exchange



Opening up the Queensway to public activity encourages localized appropriation and interaction between residents, tenants and visitors alike.

steps for seeding connectivity

**link**  
Facilitating public access through vertical circulation and porosity across the structure

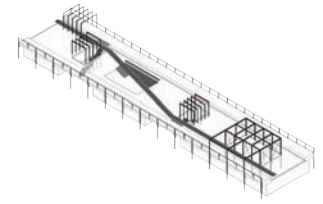


**recalibrate**  
Restructuring the ground plane to prioritize pedestrian movement over vehicular traffic



**welcome**  
Encouraging community involvement by initiating dialog and enabling action





Growth Frame



Active Surface Top

seed packet

# SUPPORT

facilitates growth



Implementing the fundamental physical and strategic frameworks ensures continuing development and adaptation of the Queensway over time.

steps for seeding support

**structure**  
Using a simple and repetitive system supports incremental building and varied use of space

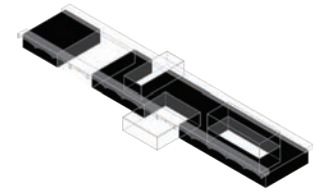


**power**  
Integrating service and utility allows for a diversity of program and flexibility of occupation

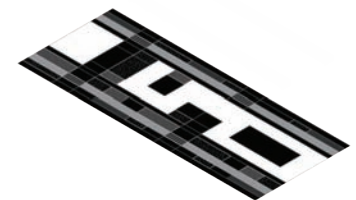


**cultivate**  
Making available varied tools and spaces to develop an active ecological corridor





Porous Mass

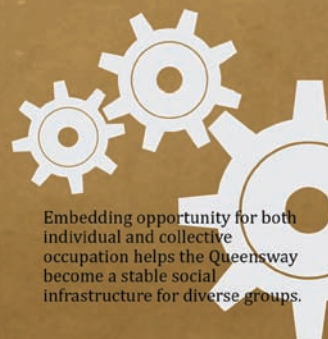


Active Surface Bottom

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# AGENCY

enables action



Embedding opportunity for both individual and collective occupation helps the Queensway become a stable social infrastructure for diverse groups.

steps for seeding agency

**provide**  
Catalyzing public events and offering short term subsidies for local businesses supports local investment

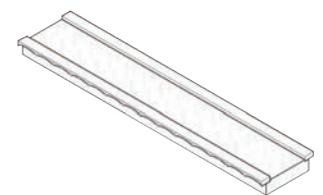


**diversify**  
Supplementing existing business with new commerce and public amenity creates a more robust community hub



**engage**  
Integrating social and economic programs encourages collective learning and appropriation





Existing Object

Figure 11 (left)  
Three strategies for seeding community engagement

Figure 12 (above)  
Recalibrating the object to facilitate public occupation

## The Design Inspiration

Rather than looking to the obvious precedent of the High Line, from which the Queensway brief purposefully distanced itself, projects from a diverse set of urban contexts and time periods were researched for their innovation in both adaptive infrastructural reuse and/or new build infrastructure as community catalyst. Three projects, one in progress in the Chicago, one recently completed in Medellin, and one long completed in Paris, are discussed here: the first is the Bloomingdale Trail; the second is the Northeastern Urban Integration project; and the third is the Viaduc Daumesnil. Each precedent speaks to the latent potential of a piece of infrastructure to have far reaching social, economic and ecological impact beyond its service role within the urban fabric. While each project is slightly different from the Queensway in terms of either typology or context, key aspects of their designs were incorporated and adapted for use in the *Seed the Queensway* proposal.

### Bloomingdale Trail

The Bloomingdale railway line in Chicago started out as an at-grade rail but as the number of pedestrian fatalities from unprotected crossings increased the city ordered the raising of the line in 1910. Unlike the Rockaway Branch Line, the Bloomingdale Line was heavily used for the transport of manufactured products until Chicago's economy entered into industrial decline starting in the 1980s. Given its original function the structural design of the line is also significantly different using a system of site-cast concrete retaining boxes filled with soil and aggregate and connected via bridges at street crossings.<sup>6</sup> (Fig 18) As a channel rather than framed armature, this structure therefore creates an even more pronounced neighbourhood division than the Queensway but also has greater opportunity for sectional change through re-appropriation of the 2.7 mile zone running along Bloomingdale Avenue. The re-appropriation of the Bloomingdale line is also a Trust for Public Land project

<sup>6</sup> Chicago Department of Transportation, "Bloomingdale Trail and Park Framework Plan", 13.



Figure 13  
Direct access from street level to Bloomingdale trail level



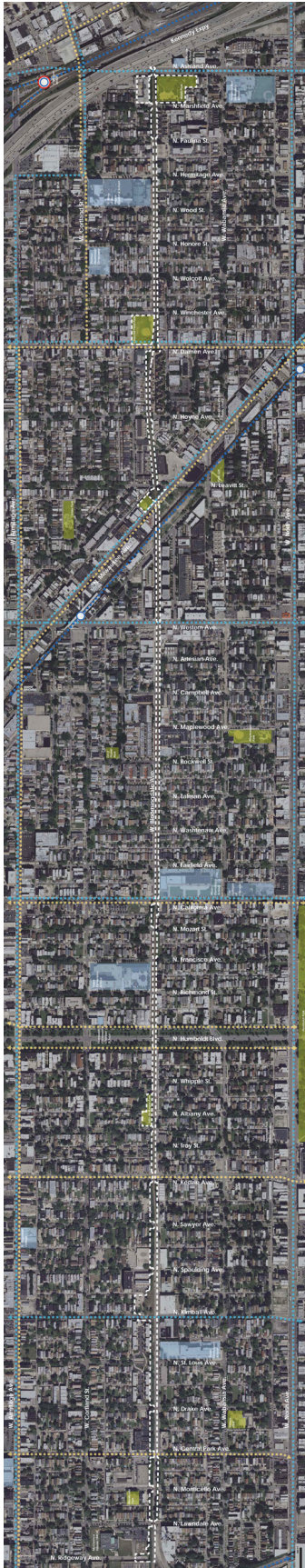
Figure 14  
Access stairs to the Bloomingdale trail used to create urban public space



Figure 15  
Plantings used to create soft divisions between paths of movement and



Figure 16  
Bloomingdale's plantings and surface treatments used to divide different



in collaboration with the City of Chicago and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.

While the Queensway project offers greater opportunity for programming below and above the structure as well as creating openings within the structure itself, what the Bloomingdale project offers as precedent is how various hierarchies of circulation are designed to create integrated recreational space. There are access points distributed along the length of the trail at major intersections but they vary in scale. Some offer relatively direct transitions from street level (Fig 13) while others create larger places of gathering. The use of stairs as a built landscape element has incredible potential to slow movement, create seating and define space all of which contribute to the public realm of the city by encouraging the opportunity for encounter. (Fig 14) While the urban fabric surrounding the Ozone Park Station is more dense and therefore doesn't allow as substantial of a terraced public space and access point, we achieved a similar space by clearing area underneath the elevated structure. By locating this towards the north end of the Ozone Park Station site at the intersection with the neighbourhood's primary commercial artery and bus route (Fig 9) and introducing a new service program such as a cafe, we created a small gathering space to serve both Queensway visitors and Ozone Park residents. Not only does it provide a welcoming neighbourhood access point to the upper level but it also provides space, set back from the street edge, for people to wait for a bus or sit with a coffee. (Fig 19)

One of the primary design principles inspired by the Bloomingdale project is the subtle division of different paths of movement for walking, running, and biking as well as zones of rest. (Fig 18) In this project a wider more direct path is used for cycling and running while a narrower path,

which winds through vegetated growth or runs adjacent to seating areas, is used for leisurely walking (Fig 16). This is achieved by distributing different sizes of planting, textures of surface material and changes in grade level that subsequently results in a piece of public infrastructure which accommodates a variety of occupation types and becomes an inclusive space for all age groups and lifestyles. In *Seed the Queensway* we integrated these principles by dividing circulation paths according to relative speed. (Fig 17, 19) We took advantage of the existing elevated platform decks for a cycling path on one side and walking path, suitable for wheelchairs, strollers, and skateboards on the other. This allowed us the full width of the deck in between to introduce

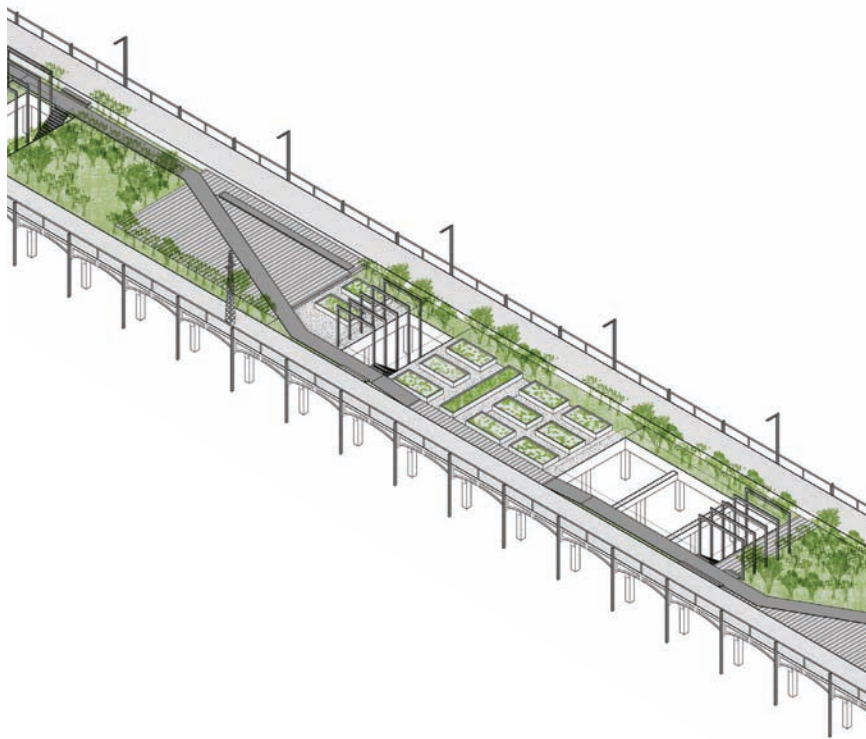


Figure 17  
Seed the Queensway upper level with path hierarchies and planted versus



Figure 18  
Bloomingdale planting strategies to create soft divisions between types of

programed space. We chose to provide a dedicated walking path by way of a lightweight steel grate structure that sits above the deck ballast allowing for wild grasses and plants to continue to grow beneath it and for it to more easily connect to the two flanking paths as it weaves back and forth across the deck space and provides access to zones of programed space. While smaller saplings could thrive, the use of large mature trees in the Ozone Park Station site is



pedestrian passageway



not feasible without the use of large planter boxes given the shallow depth of ballast. We therefore proposed the design of various steel structures to define spaces of access and rest, provide shade, and facilitate the growth of climbing vegetation. (Fig 19) While the Bloomingdale project provided key inspiration for the design of major access points from street level and the calibration of recreational uses on the upper trail level, the Ozone Park Station site also demanded

Figure 19  
Seed the Queensway's hierarchy of circulation paths and use of stairs to contribute to the public realm



great attention to the ground plane and an understanding of the abandoned infrastructure as a three dimensional object rather than simply a vacant surface. (Fig 12)

### Santo Domingo Cable Car and Streetscape



Figure 20  
The Santo Domingo cable car route

The inspiration for the design of the ground surface comes primarily from the implementation of a cable car transit line in the Santo Domingo neighbourhood of Medellín as part of the Northeastern Urban Integral project. (Fig 20) This urban intervention, along with several others within the pilot Northeastern region, was set in motion by former mayor Sergio Fajardo and his chief architect Alejandro Echeverri. They championed the belief that locating architectural and urban projects in the poorest neighbourhoods could have radiating consequences for the city at large. While they invest primarily in civic buildings such as schools, recreation centres, libraries and so on, they also invest heavily in infrastructure and public space.<sup>7</sup> Rather than viewing infrastructure purely as a matter of efficiency, they see infrastructure as having the capacity to create public space and that the two were mutually dependent.<sup>8</sup> By locating important civic buildings at transit stations in low-income areas they ensure that mobility and social inclusion go hand in hand, thereby understanding urban ‘access’ in the broadest sense.

The cable car network in Santo Domingo is one of the most high profile infrastructural projects from the early stages of Fajardo and Echeverri’s planning strategies. It provides access across a long distance to mostly informally built areas located on very steep terrain. The lower third of the cable car is built along an existing artery while the top two thirds soar over dense residential areas, with stations at strategic points and public spaces. What becomes evident studying this project is that the construction of the

7 Michael Mehaffy, “Medellin’s Improbable Renaissance,” *Urban Land*, vol. 72, 3-4 (2013): 97.

8 *Ibid*: 98.



Figure 21  
Complex streetscape design effectively manages slope and public versus private space



Figure 22  
Paving patterns and grade changes delineate zones of occupation

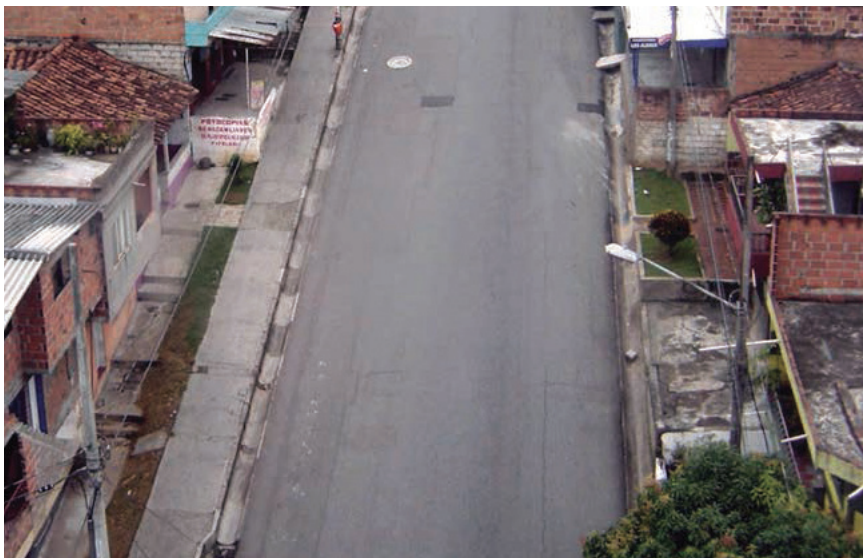


Figure 23  
The street prior to implementation of the cable car line

infrastructure was leveraged to redesign the space beneath it thereby greatly contributing to the public realm of under served communities. The infrastructure in this case is of a completely different typology than the Queensway but by understanding the surface below the cable car line as part of a holistic system, the system itself is able to become a strong catalyst for overall urban regeneration. By elevating transit, space previously dedicated to vehicles becomes redundant and the streetscape is liberated for public and semi-public occupation. (Fig 22) By creating an extra wide pedestrian zone, the streetscape redesign accommodates generous bands for circulation, parking, planting, rest, and terraces for private residences and business, thereby introducing more opportunity for activation of the public realm. (Fig 21) Though some delineating of these zones, particularly the terraces, is created naturally due to the necessary management of the slope, the rest is achieved through a relatively simple use of concrete curbs, boxes, steps and patterned paving.

In *Seed the Queensway* we combined some of the characteristics of the Santo Domingo streetscape redesign with our concept of 'active surfaces' which could be either paved surfaces for occupation or planted surfaces for ecological management. We integrated them into the west side of the structure where there was greater distance to the buildings fronting onto the site by re-calibrating the streetscape to increase the pedestrian zone. (Fig 24) The streets on either side of the platform are in fact one-way but with a very wide paved passage and no designated parking zones, they have been overwhelmed by cars. The work surfaces are paired with businesses, either service, commercial or light industrial, to provide exterior space to expand. (Fig 25,26) A cafe or bar could have a patio, a bike shop extra tinkering space, an auto body shop a parking or repair area, a contractor or distributor a zone to store

material palettes in transit. By providing extra functional exterior space businesses are encouraged to be good stewards to the public realm. The differentiation between street, parking, sidewalk, and active surface is achieved primarily through changes in paving with the active surface delineated by a darker, more porous stone paving as opposed to larger concrete tiles used for the sidewalk. (Fig 25) These active surfaces also cut through the block where smaller vertical access points are introduced to create greater porosity and occupation throughout the ground plane.

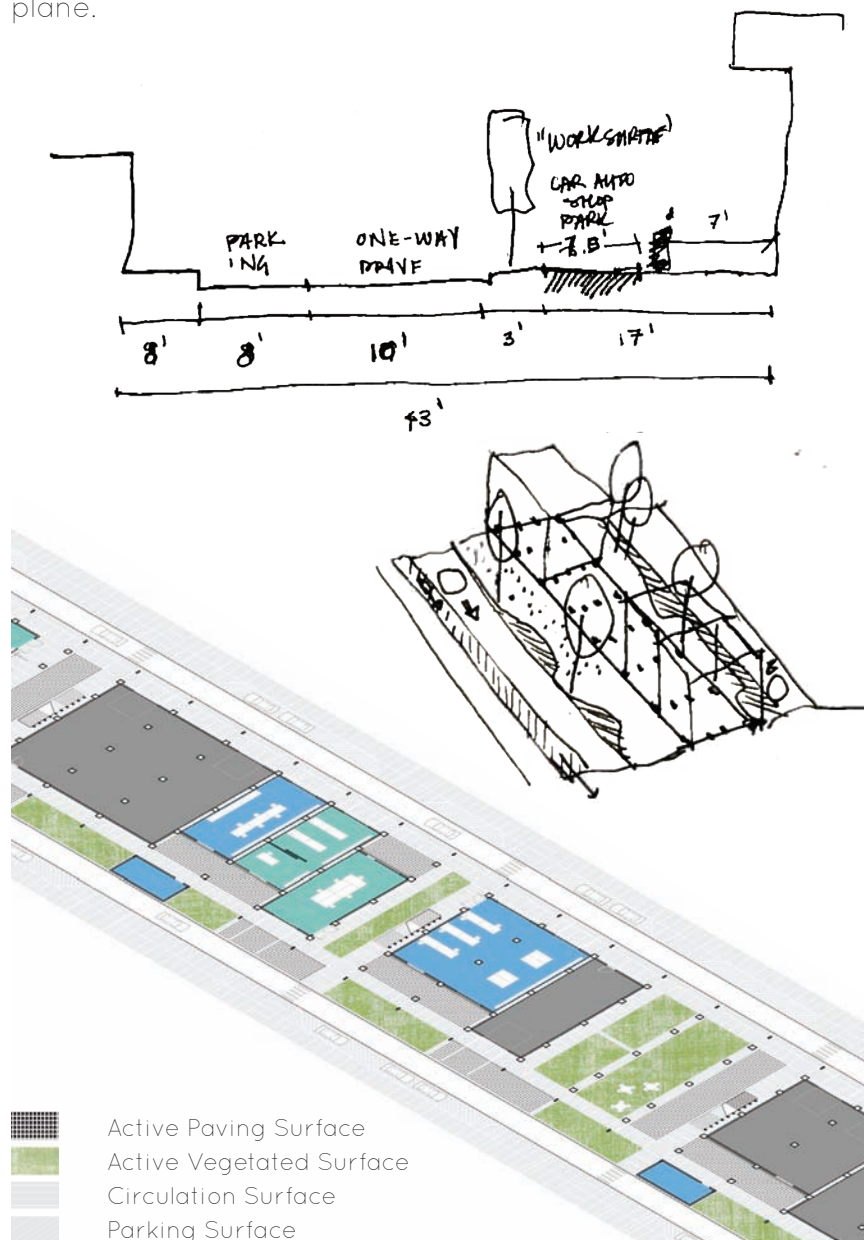


Figure 24  
Recalibrating the Ozone Park Station streetscape and introduction of active surfaces

Figure 25  
Creating a unified ground plane through porosity and patterned surface





Figure 26  
Activating the streetscape  
with work surfaces for small  
business, planting beds  
for water management  
and mid-block vertical  
connections

**Promenade Plantee  
& Le Viaduc des Arts,  
Viaduc Daumesnil,  
Paris**

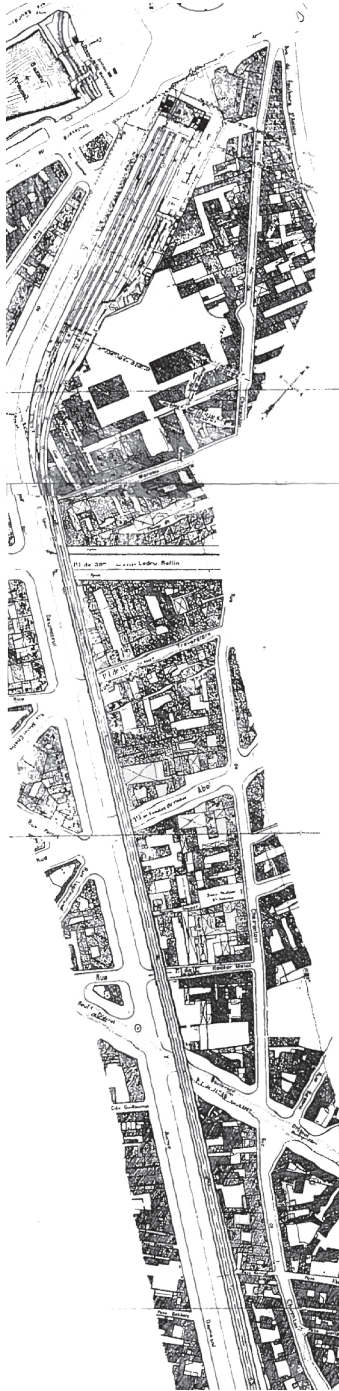


Figure 27  
The street prior to  
implementation of the  
cable car line

If the Bloomingdale Trail focuses primarily on conversion of the elevated railway for recreational and ecological use, and the Santo Domingo cable car implementation focuses on the recalibration of the public ground plane, the renovation of the Viaduc Daumesnil in Paris is a critical precedent for its use of the in-between space framed by the structure and the potential diversity of conditions on its top surface. The viaduct was built for the Bastille Line, inaugurated in 1859 and eventually abandoned until 1969. It then sat vacant until renovation began in 1988 following the selection of architect Patrick Berger's competition submission. The length of the project was fully completed in 1997.<sup>9</sup> In the 1970s consideration had been given to demolishing the structure but it backed up against 5 kilometres of lower-income residential fabric with blank side faces that would have been exposed and the narrow 10 meter width of the viaduct would not have provided viable space for infill projects.<sup>10</sup> (Fig 27) The viaduct effectively provided a continuous facade along Avenue Daumesnil leading to the Bastille Station.

The very names of the project components, Promenade Plantee and Le Viaduc des Arts, make clear the vision for its role in the urban fabric. While the top surface is seen as an urban park, a space of retreat and leisure, with various characteristics along its length, the infill is reserved for spaces of creativity. In the face of speculative development and technologically driven projects, the preservation of this heavy piece of infrastructure becomes a moment of pleasure and folly in the endless density of Paris.<sup>11</sup> Berger's design proposal is predominantly a process of elimination manifested through the stripping of the monolithic stone and brick structure to accentuate the space

9 Le Viaduc des Arts History, <<http://www.leviaducdesarts.com/decouvrir>>

10 Marc Bedarida, "Walking through the Psychogeography of Paris," *Lotus*, vol. 97(1998): 97

11 *Ibid*: 95



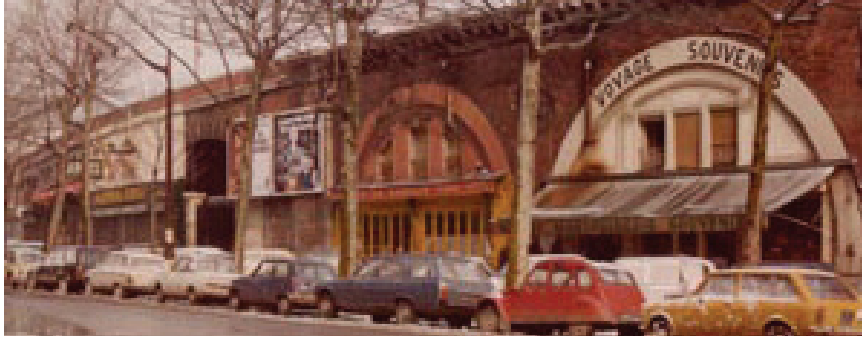


Figure 28  
Increasing individualization  
of original shopfronts



Figure 29  
Patrick Berger's new  
shopfront design

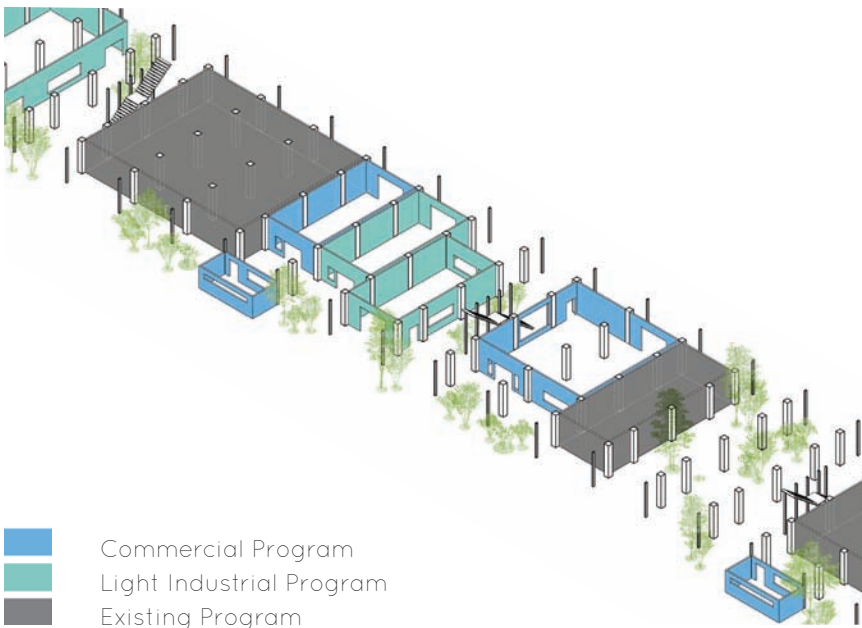


Figure 30  
Play of solid and void under  
the Ozone Park Station  
platform

created by the arches. (Fig 29) The ultimate continuity of the infrastructural facade is achieved through a uniform and lightweight wood and glass shopfront system. While the simplicity of Berger's design highlights the beauty of the existing structure and creates fantastic commercial space beneath it, the eclectic nature of the original shopfronts is more appropriate to the condition of the Ozone Park Station

site. (Fig 28) In *Seed the Queensway* we sought to combine these old and new characteristics. We recessed shopfronts from the first structural line to expose its rhythmic quality but proposed a more solid material palette that could be adapted with colour and cladding by independent business as part of their lease. (Fig 26) This is more in tune with the predominantly industrial nature of the existing businesses which clearly thrive in the area and provide valuable service and employment but do not necessarily house functions that would benefit from a glazed shopfront. The light steel structural columns, which serve as platform bracing, handrail support, and conduit for drainage and electricity, also provide anchors for individualized signage and awnings. (Fig 26) By conceiving of the business zones as solid boxes of program set within a repetitive structure, we were able to create a more varied street facade with various depths of 'active surface' and void spaces that cut across the structure to increase porosity and create zones for vertical access and covered exterior space. (Fig 30)

The Promenade Plantee, the urban park on top of the Viaduc Daumesnil, is characterized by the variety of experiential zones created along its path. The park itself extends further than the viaduct, passing through tunnels and at grade conditions but in the elevated portions alone the use of planters, trellises and surface texture in various ways creates a multitude of different types of passage and gathering space. (Fig 32, 33) This is much more curated 'natural' environment than in the Bloomingdale Trail project. While we recognized recreation and movement as primary functions for the future of the Queensway as a whole, we also felt that in order to develop a community hub at Ozone Park Station we needed to program the top surface and that there was opportunity to create more three dimensional space. Within the relatively short block of the platform we integrated planters for either small vegetable

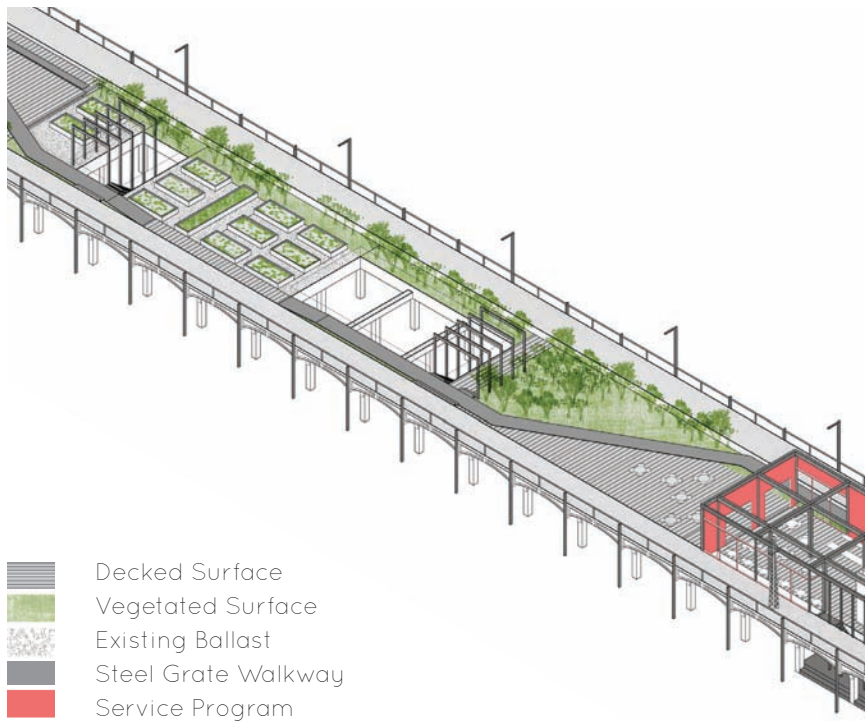


Figure 31  
 Creating zones of use  
 through material change  
 and planting



Figure 32  
 Decked surfaces on the  
 Promenade Plantee become  
 gathering spaces



Figure 33  
 Low planting and trellis  
 structures create a sense of  
 passage and retreat

harvesting or curated planting, large swaths of vegetated areas where the existing shrub and wildflower growth would be amplified, and decked surfaces for general community use or events. (Fig 31) In *Seed the Queensway* we integrated the idea of trellises but introduced them at a larger, tree-like, scale and located them where we also proposed mid-block cuts into the railway deck. The trellises therefore became conceived of as steel armatures that supported the growth of vegetation from planting beds at grade upwards, thereby



also shading gathering spaces below. (Fig 19,26,34) By acting as additional support for stairs at these mid-block cuts they visually and physically create vertical connections along the length of the Ozone Park Station site. In thinking about the site as an object rather than surface it was critical to provide both horizontal and vertical porosity throughout in order to create a truly open system.

Figure 34  
Steel trellises, wood decking, planters and wild growth areas used to create zones of potential activity



## Conclusions

Railway to park conversion projects have become increasingly popular as long abandoned railway structures begin to be seen as opportunities for re-investment by cities and their planning departments. They also become important conservation and restoration projects as urban centres that have undergone industrial decline re-appropriate historically important civic infrastructures that were key pieces of urban development at both local and regional scales. The conversion of the Rockaway Beach Line to the Queensway is a significant project that touches many neighbourhoods with a diverse set of socio-economic characteristics. This is a project which, to a greater extent than the High Line, has potential for critical impact rather than simply to provide a tourist attraction. Through our research into potential design precedents, we sought strategies, however small or basic, which could foster diversity and inclusivity. Each of the three projects selected for discussion here, presented us with key design elements which we could adapt to the context and scope of the competition. The Bloomingdale Trail in Chicago was a strong example of maximizing a narrow width for a variety of recreational purposes by using a simple set of planting, material and seating strategies. It also demonstrated the potential of access points to not only act as spaces of community gathering but create a network of intersections which could re-integrate the abandoned infrastructure into the urban fabric. The Santo Domingo cable car in Medellin, despite being a different infrastructural typology, was perhaps the most critical precedent for thinking about the impact of infrastructure on the public realm. By understanding the impacted urban space as part of the design project the implementation of the cable car was able to not only improve mobility but also increase the value and potential of civic space to act as catalyst in community regeneration. Finally the Promenade Plantee and Viaduc des Arts in Paris encouraged us to think more playfully about the design project in general and to

create a variety of experiences within a single block.

While the renovation of Viaduc Daumesnil was done, and is maintained, in a much more curated fashion, we hoped to propose a design strategy which would act as a flexible framework, requiring minimum maintenance, and thus be appropriated by the community and businesses over time. This kind of framework is, in physical terms, our interpretation of Richard Sennett's idea of the open system or border. 'Seeding' as a design and planning strategy does not imagine a finished state so much as understand a project, particularly an urban one, as a process in constant development as opposed to one that develops according to cleanly defined phases. The design proposal seeks to constantly refer back to the tripartite relationship of connectivity, which initiates exchange, support, which facilitates growth, and agency, which enables action. By opening up the Queensway to public activity we encourage localized appropriation and interaction between residents, tenants and visitors; by implementing the fundamental physical and planning frameworks we ensure continuing development and adaptation of the Queensway over time; and by embedding opportunity for both individual and collective investment we help the Queensway become a stable social infrastructure for a diverse population.

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