

Principles of Good Urban Design

Why are they important?

The question of who designs our city should be a matter of principle, not privilege. An important goal of the Principles is to democratize design with a set of shared values and language through which New Yorkers can evaluate, discuss, and advocate for good design.

For example, the Principles can be used when discussing ideas for your community or in formal recommendations about a development project in public review.

The Principles demonstrate how design choices can influence a wide range of outcomes that extend beyond how the city looks, including access to housing and jobs, public health, safety, climate resiliency, and more.

Who should use these?

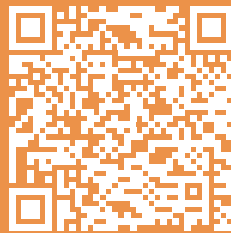
The public – The Principles can help empower New Yorkers with tools to participate in the design process and planning conversations.

The government – The Principles can support consistent design feedback across different levels of local government to ensure an equitable New York City that is consistent with its policy and priorities.

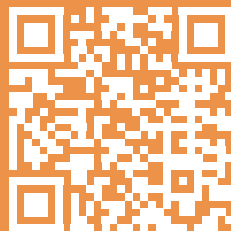
The developer – The Principles demonstrate how developers and other real estate professionals can incorporate good design into their projects that creates valuable business and community investments alike.

The Professional – The Principles can provide architects, designers, planners, and other professionals with considerations to design the city's public realm in a holistic and cohesive manner.

To learn more,
please visit:



nyc.gov/urbandesign



goodurbandesign.nyc

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD URBAN DESIGN

BETTER NEIGHBORHOODS IN NEW YORK CITY THROUGH DESIGN

The Principles of Good Urban Design offer a set of values and goals to help you advocate for your community's needs through design. The Principles are meant to inform conversations about the buildings, streets, parks, plazas, and all of the spaces in between that shape New York City.

The Principles were first published in 2017 and updated starting in 2021 with feedback from New Yorkers across the city. As we continue to review this feedback, a full report on the updated Principles of Good Urban Design will be ready in Spring of 2023. For background on the public engagement process visit goodurbandesign.nyc.

Enhance People's Daily Lives

1

Everyone should feel safe and comfortable moving around New York City and enjoying its many open spaces. Good design can contribute to a more inclusive, enjoyable experience of everyday life in a city. A well-designed city creates a place of belonging where people not only feel like they are part of the city, but that they city is part of them.

This principle speaks to:

- **Accessibility and Safety**
- **Mobility and Connectivity**
- **Comfort and Beauty**
- **Quality and Durability**

Care for a Neighborhood's History, Culture, and Identity

2

People make our neighborhoods and the buildings, parks and streets are their backdrop. Good design respects the histories, identities, and cultures that have shaped and continue to shape the city's many diverse neighborhoods.

This principle speaks to:

- **Community and Diversity**
- **Existing Networks and Uses**
- **Natural Features and Resources**
- **Building Features and Form**

Embrace the City's Dynamism

3

New York City is an unparalleled, dynamic, and vibrant world capital. Whether it is the iconic landmarks admired around the world, the bustling commercial districts driving innovation, the vibrant parks that everyone can enjoy, or the rhythm of apartment buildings that define a neighborhood – “New Yorkness” looks different in every neighborhood. Good urban design can challenge preconceptions, advance progress, and open new ideas.

This principle speaks to:

- **Innovation and Creativity**
- **Flexibility and Variety**
- **Old and New**
- **Resourcefulness and Tenacity**

Confront Society's Greatest Challenges

4

New York City must secure its future against many challenges of today and tomorrow, from the climate crisis to social inequity. We must make design choices that help us build a safer, stronger, fairer, more resilient city, and ensure the city is a livable place for all New Yorkers for generations to come.

This principle speaks to:

- **Sustainability and Adaptability**
- **Equity and Opportunity**
- **Health and Well-being**
- **Diversity and Mutual Understanding**