

REINVENTING NEWARK:

Visions of the City from the Twentieth Century

Completed buildings always represent compromises between the vision of architects and planners and the various competing interests that can see a plan to completion—or not. Unrealized plans, therefore, lend insight into the potential that underlies a city's built environment. Reinventing Newark recovers some of the plans for city projects that were never realized. In doing so, it reveals hidden facets of the city's history—ulterior expressions of change in a persisting civic imagination.

We can learn about a city and its history by reflecting on what it's become. We can learn just as much about a city by excavating its unrealized dreams: what plans were drawn, entertained, then rejected; why some failed to gain community support, while others received this blessing. We stand to learn from the economic, social, and political challenges that faced the city's decision makers, and from how they responded to those demands. Understanding that city plans evolve through exclusions helps us appreciate the built city not only as it is and as it might have been but, just as important, as it may yet become. We see the city as a living process, shaped by the ongoing pull between vision and realization. Reinventing Newark is divided into six general sectors of planning: sports, entertainment, and cultural centers; business centers; city beautification; office towers; transportation; and imaginative overviews.