



Class Twelve

Urban Policy 4211/6606

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Class Twelve

*Intervening to Catalyze Preferred
Emergent Urban Outcomes*

We know that cities are failing to deliver their promised benefits to specific populations in specific geographies

- Racialized history of urban development **has segregated our cities and concentrated poverty**
 - Redlining, highway construction, public housing, urban renewal projects and other ill-advised public policies have **disrupted the fractal geometry** of our cities and undermined their functioning as healthy complex adaptive systems
- So the question is, what should be the agenda for our urban leaders to address the racial inequities stemming from this history?

Neighborhood effects are the mechanism through which poor outcomes emerge

Social

- **Social Contagion:** Behaviors, aspirations, and attitudes may be changed by contact with peers
- **Collective Socialization:** Conform to local social norms conveyed by neighborhood role models and other social pressures
- **Social Networks:** Influence by interpersonal communication of information transmitted through neighbors
- **Social Cohesion and Control:** Degree of neighborhood social disorder and its converse, “collective efficacy”
- **Competition:** Groups within the neighborhood compete for resources
- **Relative Deprivation:** Residents with some socioeconomic success a source of dis-amenities for less-well off neighbors
- **Parental Mediation:** Parents’ physical and mental health, stress, coping skills, sense of efficacy, behaviors, and material resources

Source: *The Mechanism(s) of Neighborhood Effects Theory, Evidence, and Policy Implications* by George C. Galster

Environmental

- **Exposure to Violence:** People in danger suffer psychological and physical responses that impair their functioning
- **Physical Surroundings:** Decayed physical conditions of the built environment
- **Toxic Exposure:** Exposure to unhealthy levels of pollutants because of land uses and other ecological conditions

Geographic

- **Spatial Mismatch:** Little connectivity and accessibility to economic opportunities
- **Public Services:** Inferior public services and facilities

Institutional

- **Stigmatization:** Public stereotypes held by powerful institutional or private actors
- **Local Institutional Resources:** Low quality quality institutions
- **Local Market Actors:** Bad market actors that may encourage or discourage certain behaviors

Although cities are comprised of a series of nested subsystems, it is the neighborhood that is most important

- Neighborhoods are the “product” that people choose to buy and invest in
- “Neighborhood effects” are the primary drivers of social outcomes (Sampson)
- Sources of toxic stress largely express themselves at the neighborhood level

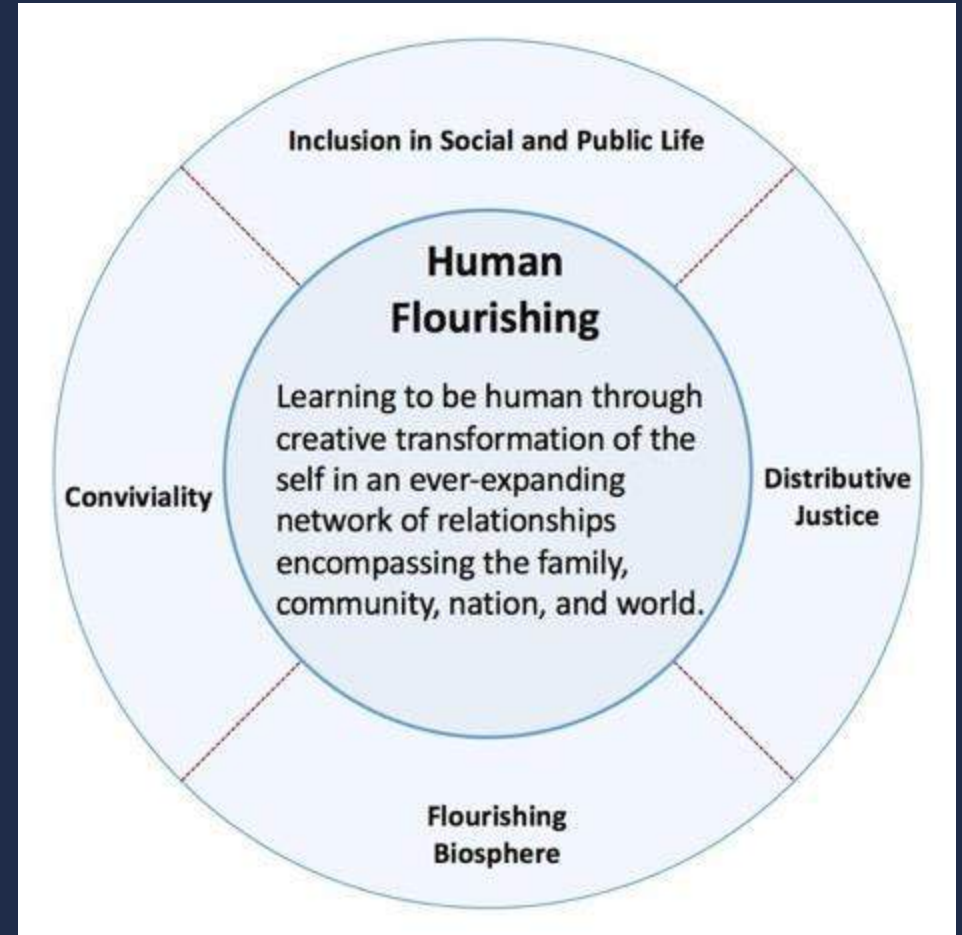
What is a Neighborhood?

A neighborhood is a special construction denoting a geographical unit in which residents share proximity and the circumstances that come with it. Inhabitants share values, interests and styles of living

- Social interaction
- Mutual aid
- Political engagement
- Local communication

The relative health of a neighborhood is related to the degree to which it promotes human flourishing

- We know healthy neighborhoods when we see them
- But neighborhoods, like all complex adaptive systems, **are never static**
- They evolve over time, so the challenge is to know how and when to intervene in a neighborhood to improve its health



Panarchy is the adaptive cycle through which complex adaptive systems pass

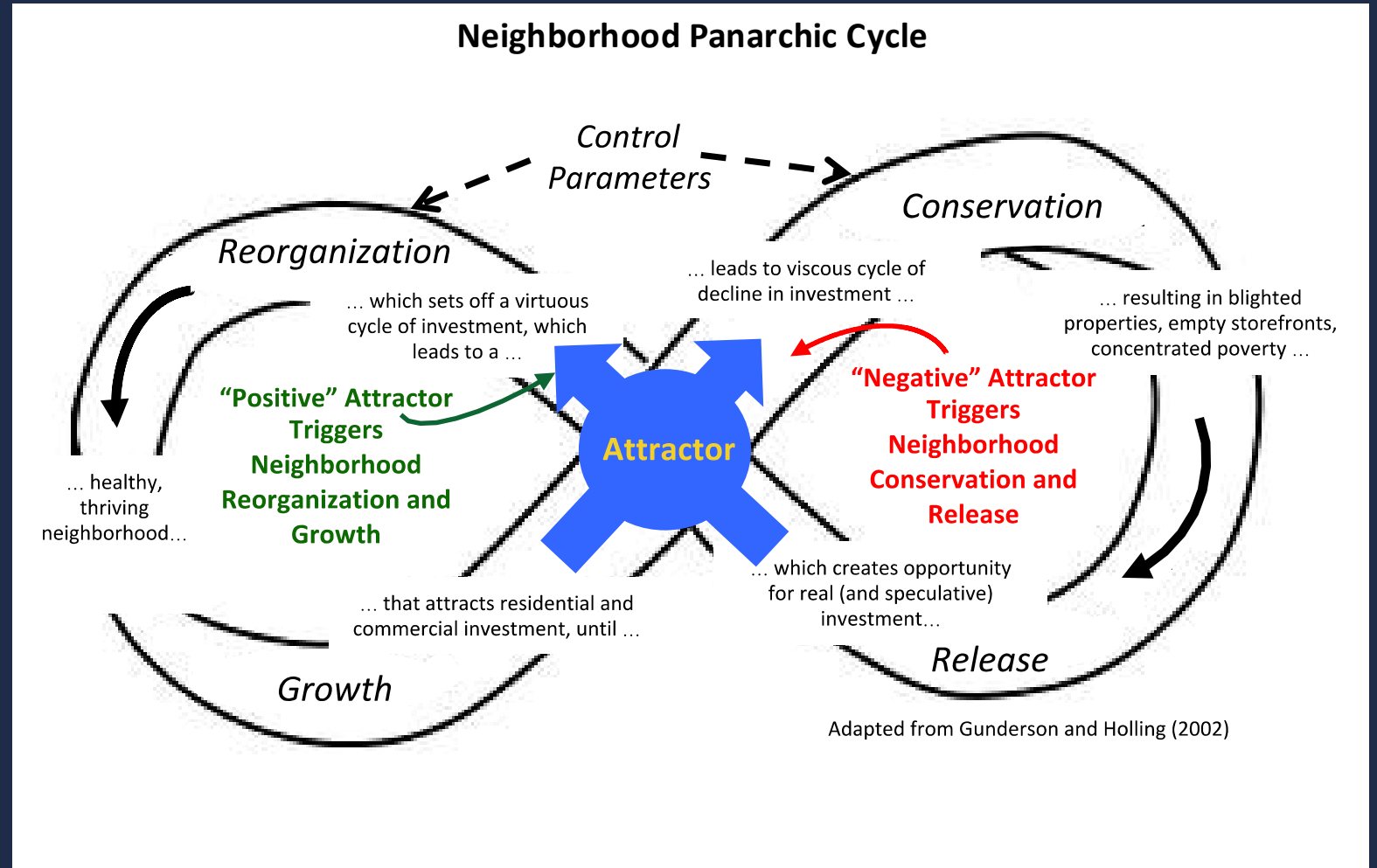
- **Growth** phase is characterized by accumulation of resources and capital
- **Conservation** phase is when growth slows down and resources are stored for system maintenance; characterized by high stability, low flexibility and low resilience
- In the **Release** phase the system experiences a chaotic collapse and breakdown; accumulated capital is released leading to a period of uncertainty, crisis, chaos, and failure
- During the **Reorganization** phase innovation and restructuring occurs. The system experiences deep transformation through systemic change and re-building efforts. It is a time of innovation and renewal

Panarchic Cycle for Complex Adaptive Systems



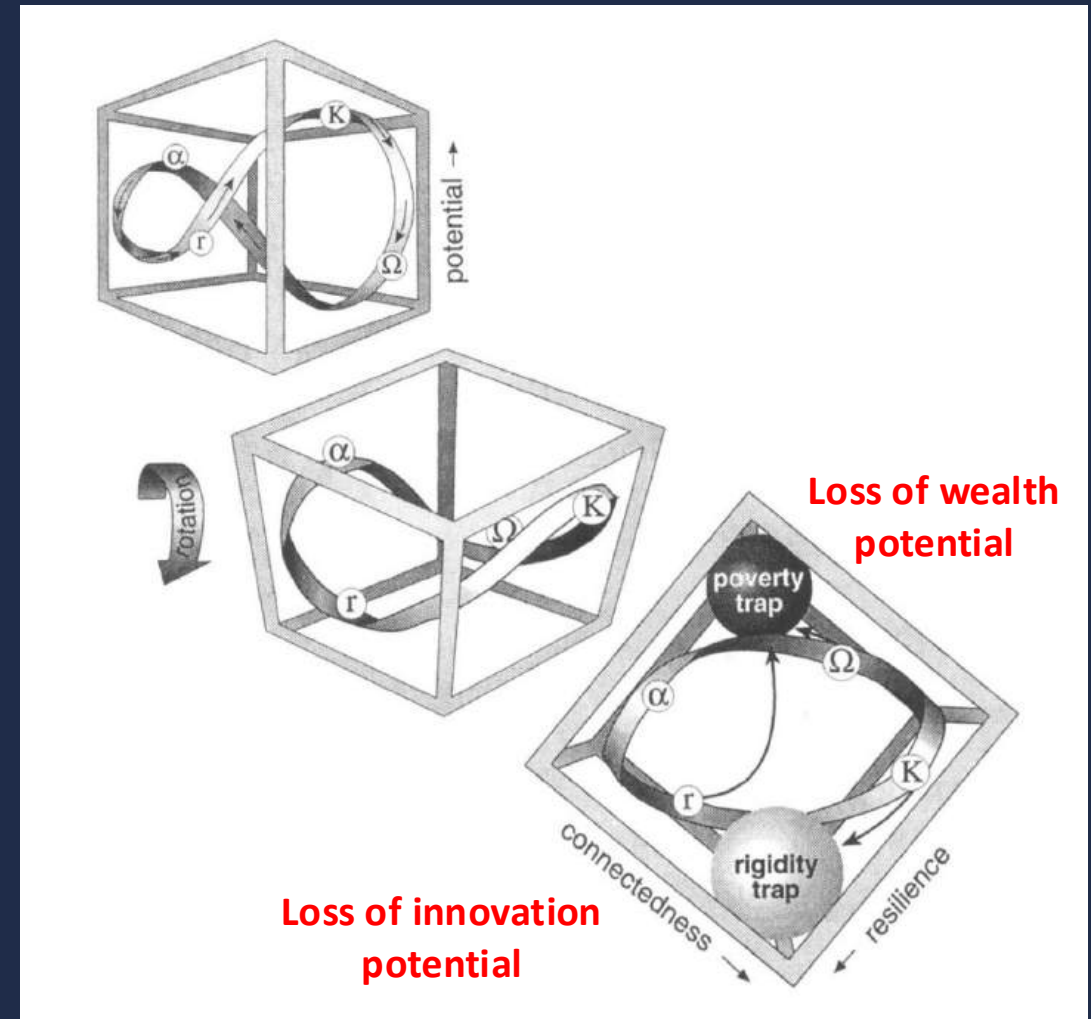
As complex adaptive systems, neighborhoods are subject to panarchic cycles

- Changes in **control parameters** can impact the direction and trajectory of the system
 - Zoning laws, school attendance zones, tax districts, social and economic trends
- **Attractors** trigger new systems behaviors
 - Public infrastructure (transit, parks, BeltLine, the “Stitch”)
 - Employment centers (Microsoft, the Gulch)

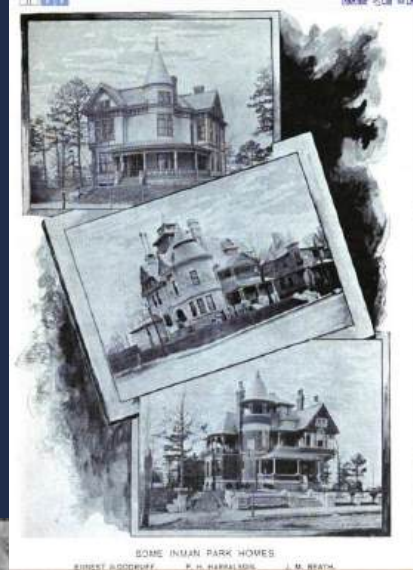
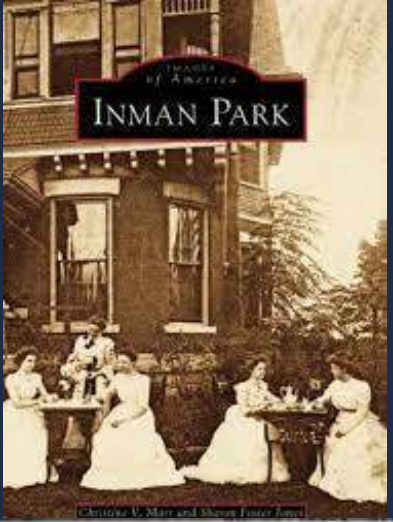


If a cycle collapses because the diversity has been disturbed, an impoverished state can result

- Example: school busing
 - A change in the system's **control parameters** (policies around where children go to school) triggered White flight
 - Exodus of White population **reduced the diversity** of the impacted neighborhoods, sapping economic vitality, leading to shuttered businesses and **a vicious cycle of disinvestment**
 - Neighborhoods stuck in a “**poverty trap**”
 - No one will make commercial investments in a neighborhood that has low purchasing power
 - People with purchasing power don't want to live in a neighborhood with no commercial vitality



Inman Park's first **Growth** phase began in the 1890's and ended in the 1930s



- Joel Hurt planned a community for wealthy residents accessible by street car



In the 1930s, several control parameters changed, leading to a **Conservation** phase lasting until the 1970s

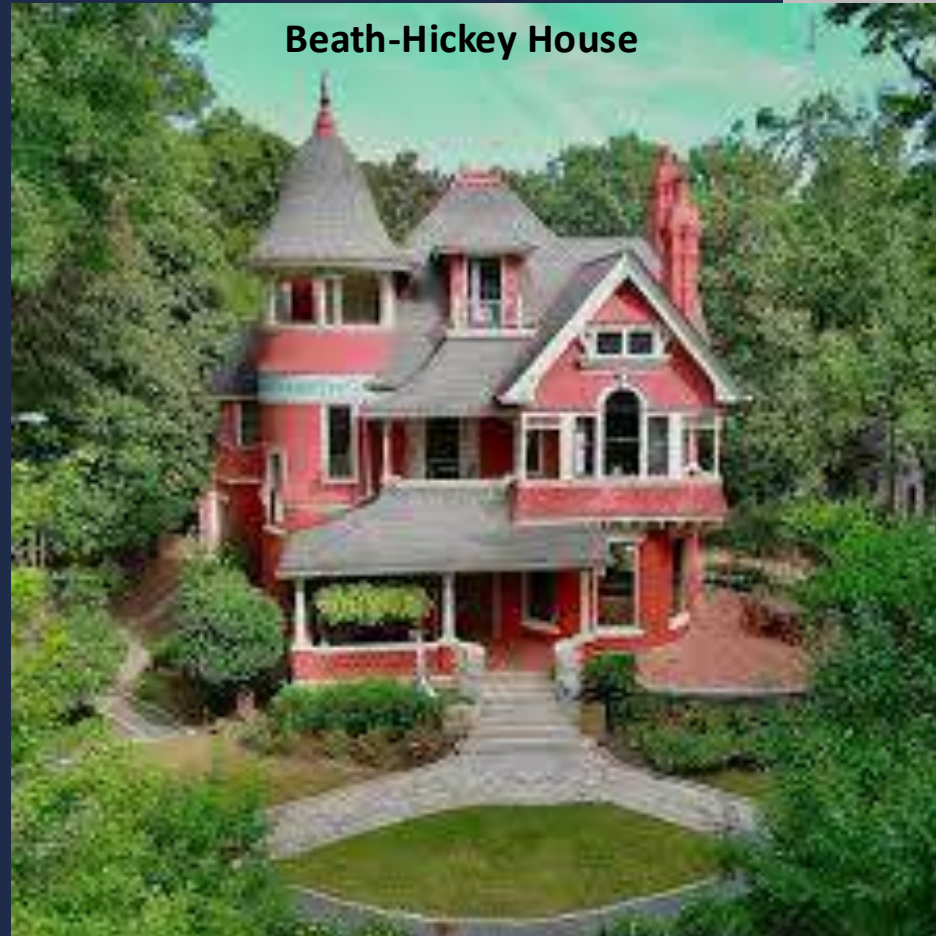
- Original **deed restrictions** on how property could be used expired
 - Apartment houses and smaller homes began to be constructed
- **Rise of the automobile** made the suburbs more accessible (and exclusive)
 - Higher income families moved out of town
- **Great Depression** lowered demand for home ownership
 - Former mansions were broken up into rental units and boarding houses

Ma Hull's Boarding House
on Edgewood Avenue



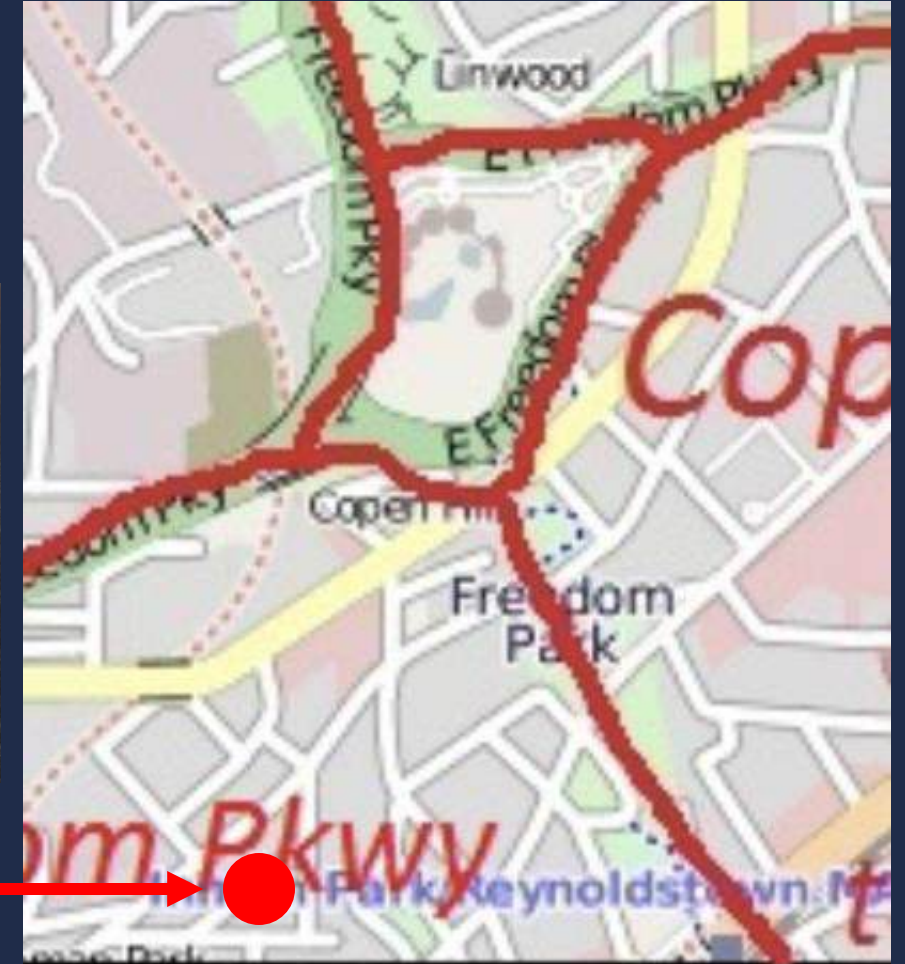
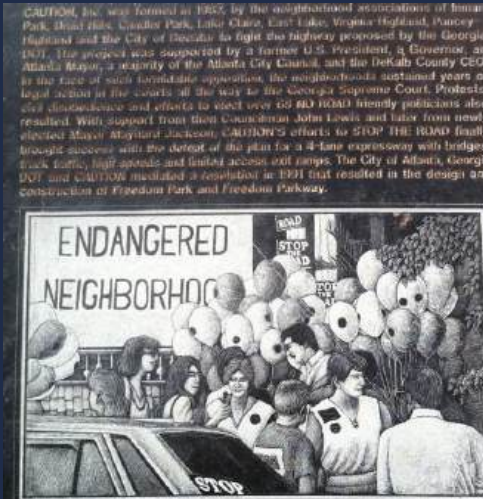
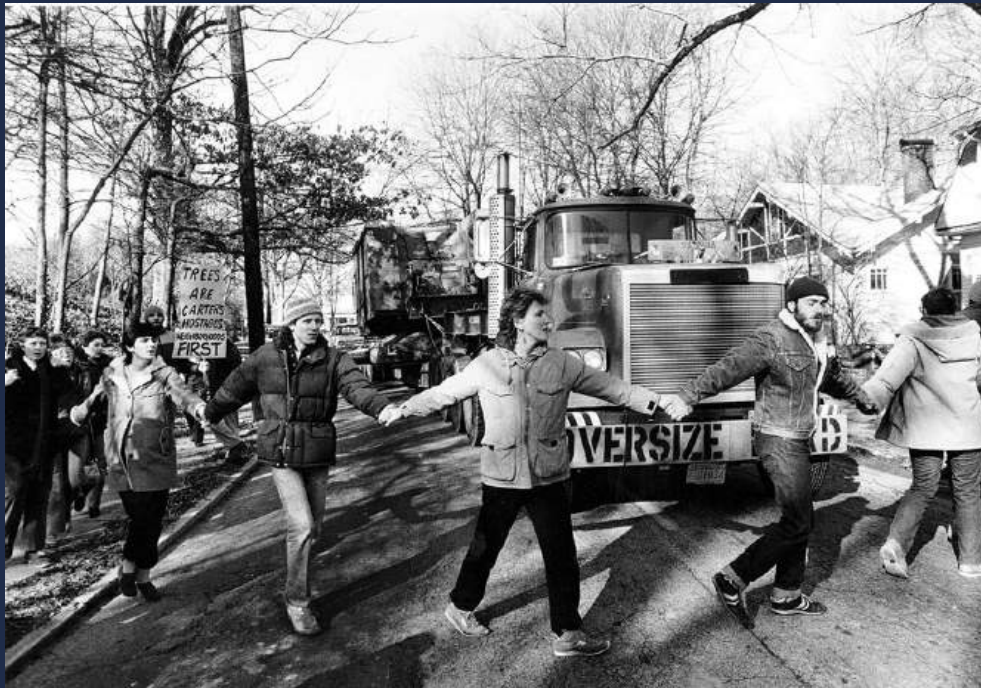
In the 1970s, hippies and artists began to buy up cheap property as Inman Park entered its **Release** phase

- Robert Griggs spotted the old Beath-Hickey house and decided to renovate it; acted as an **attractor**
- Other under-valued assets were gradually purchased, renovated and repurposed



But what launched the **Reorganization** phase was the defeat of the State's efforts to build a highway

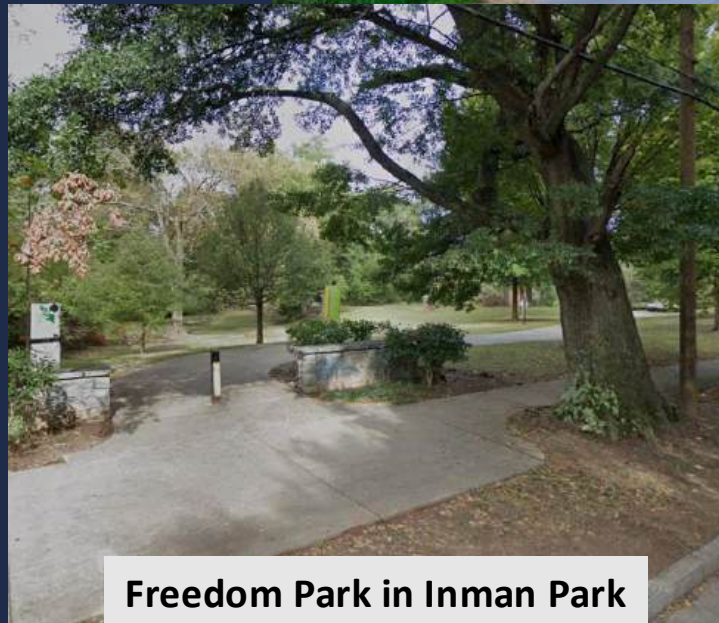
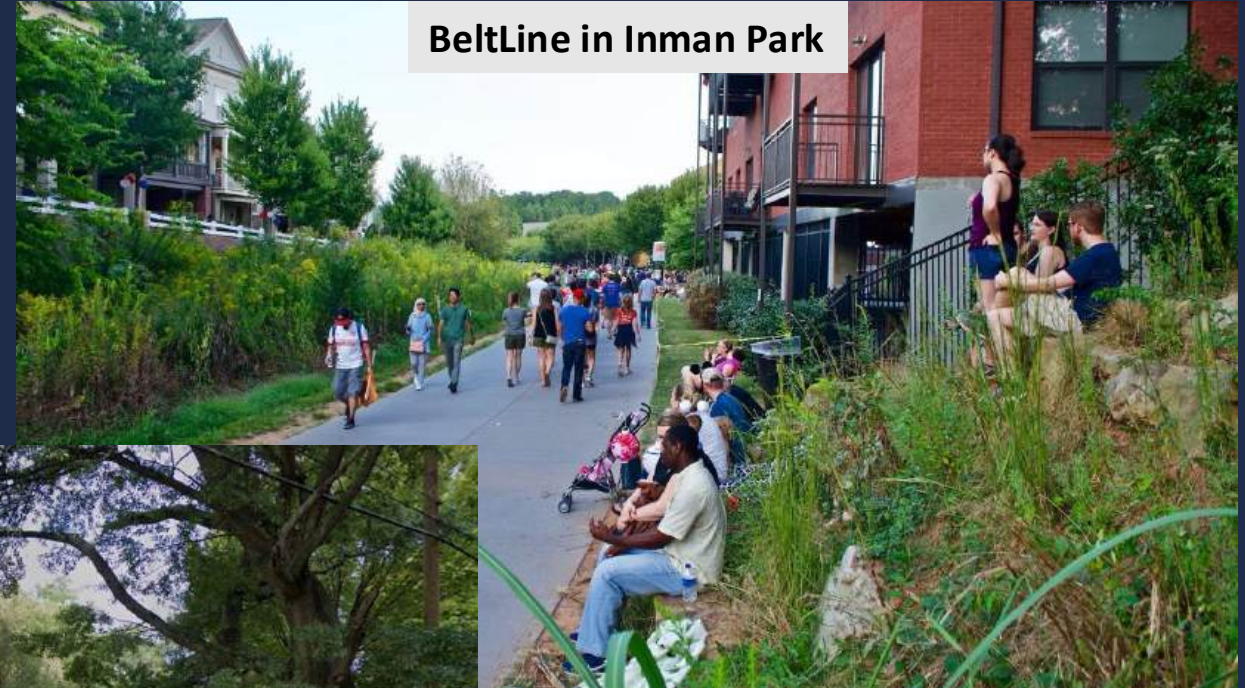
- Because Inman Park was distressed, State transportation planners targeted it for the expansion of the highway network (Stone Mountain Freeway)
- 200 acres were cleared and many historic homes razed



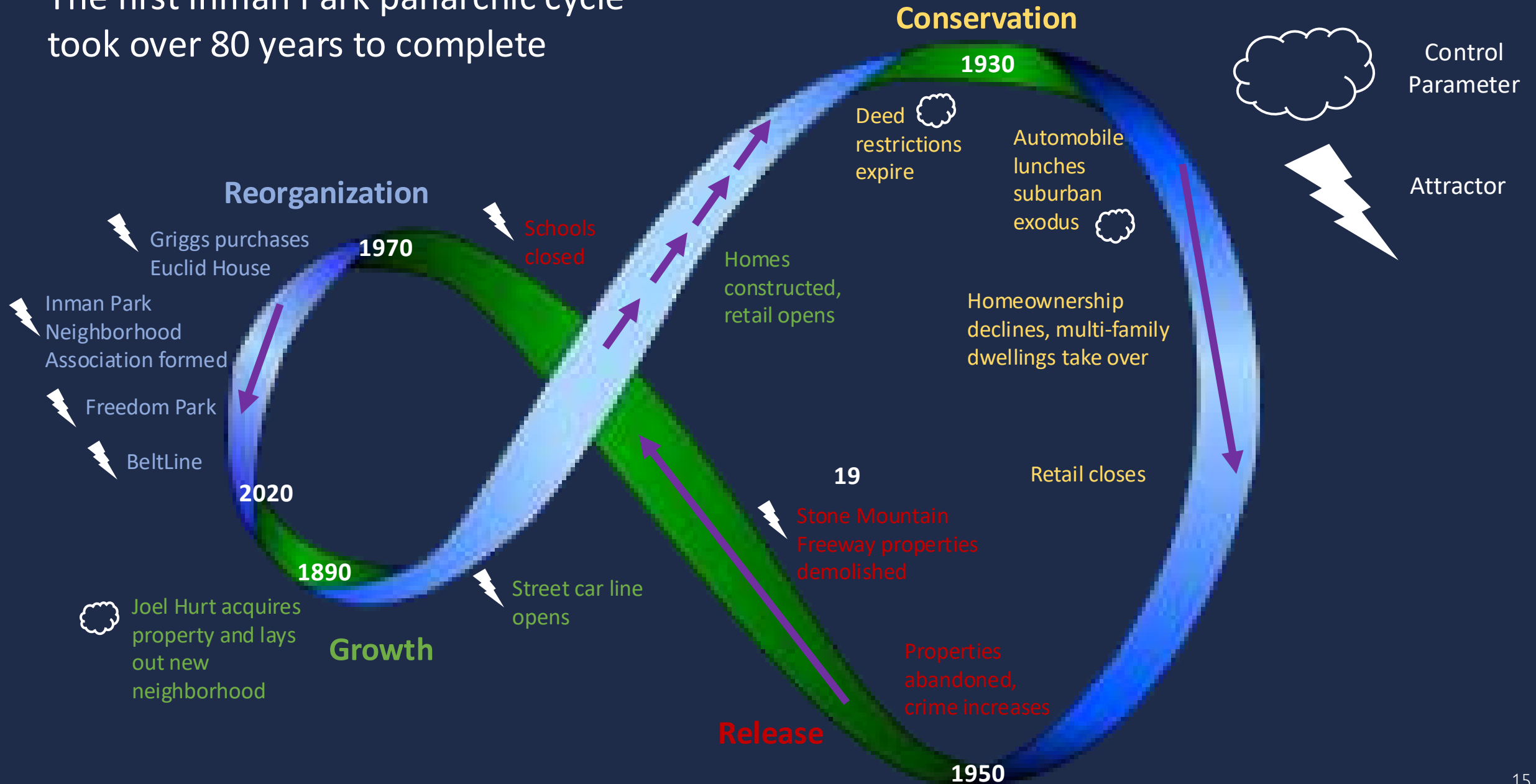
My house

Once the highway plan was defeated, a new **Growth** phase could begin

- Changes in **control parameters** included the general trend towards re-urbanization and in-town living, accelerated migration from northern to sunbelt cities, shift to healthier lifestyles with less reliance on cars
- **Attractors** include the BeltLine and Freedom Park

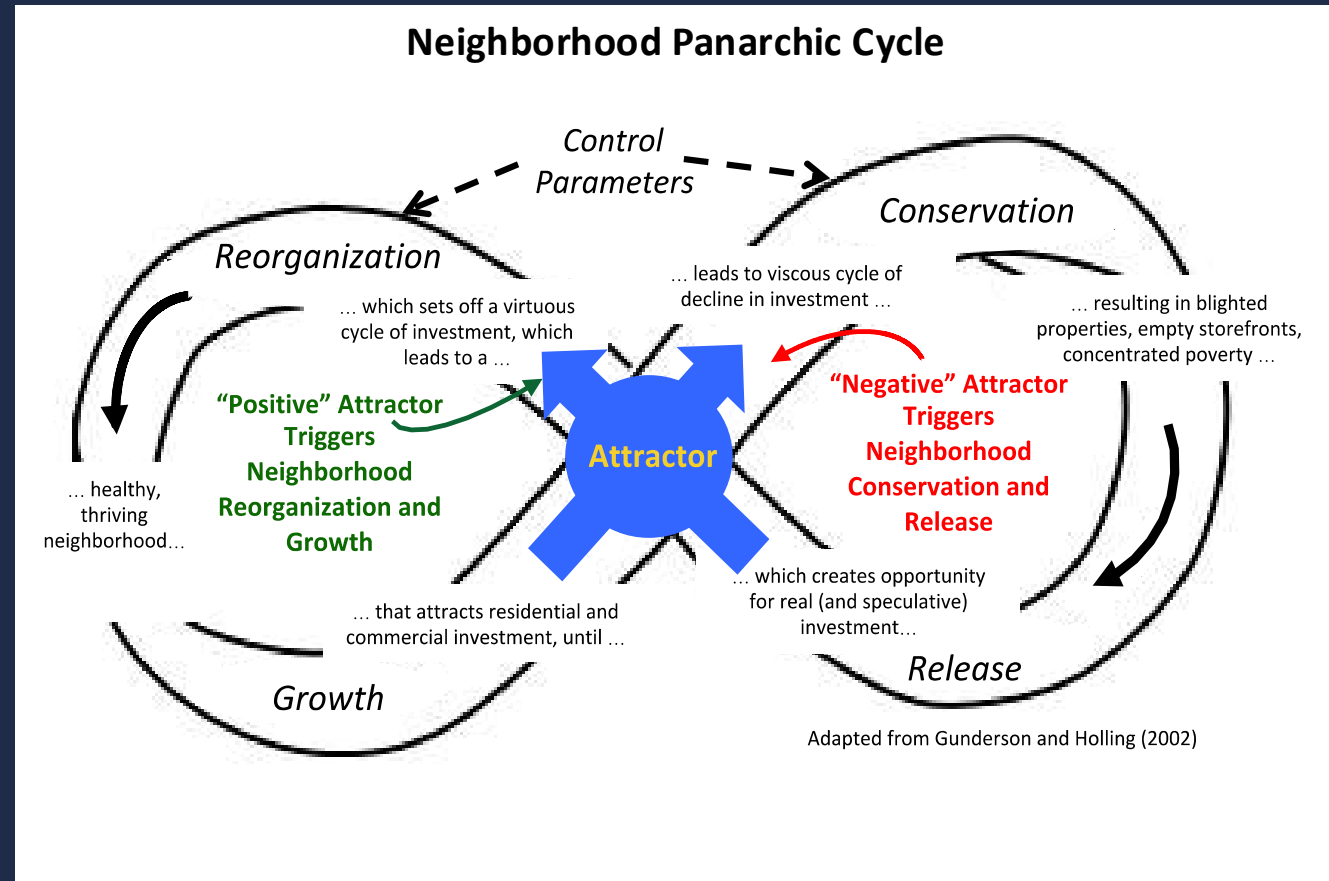


The first Inman Park panarchic cycle took over 80 years to complete



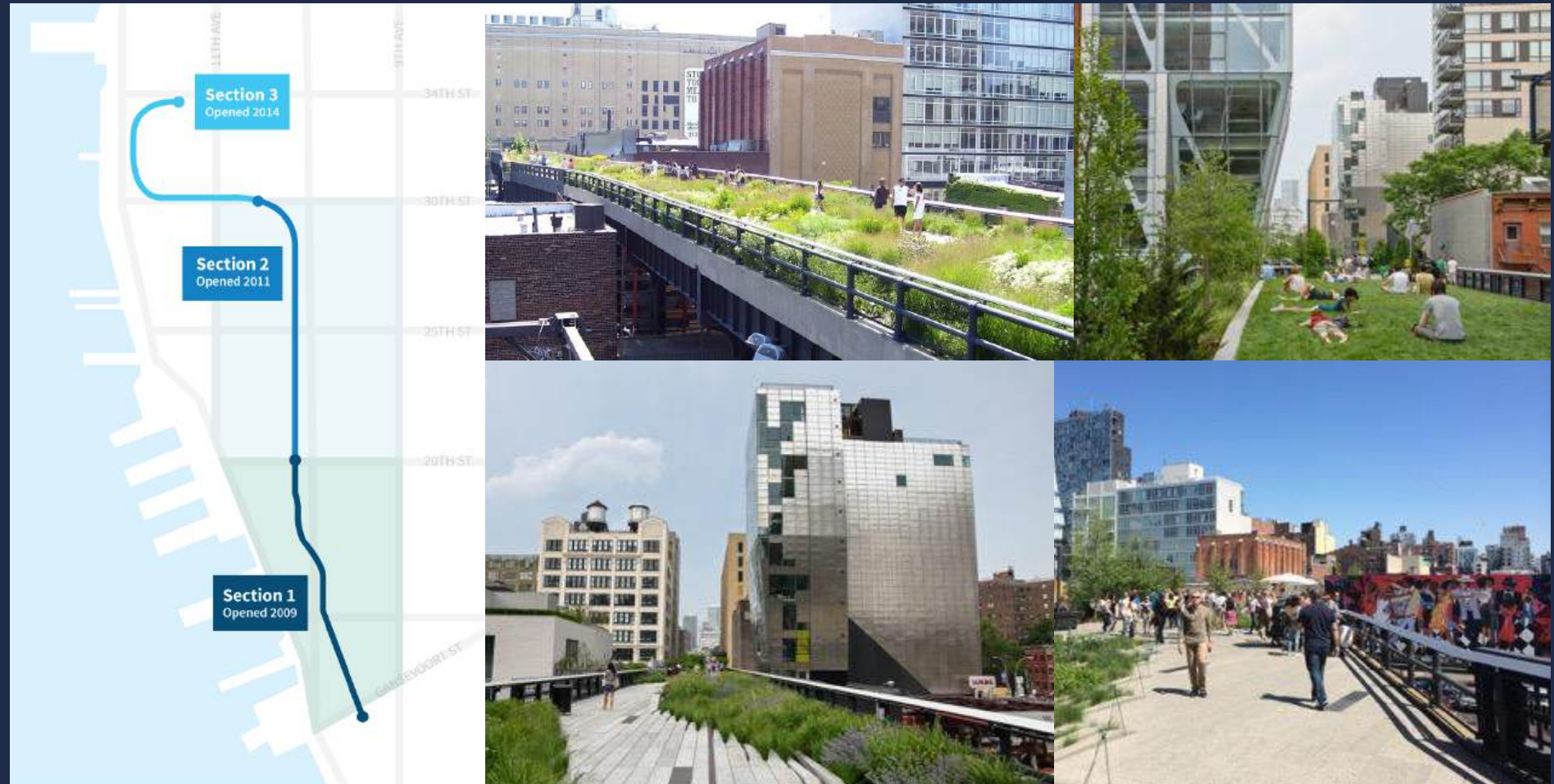
So the question is, how can city governments manage the panarchic cycles of neighborhoods?

- First, they need to recognize that they are in this business; **right now they don't**
- Second, they need to identify those **control parameters** that can influence and adopt policies that drive neighborhoods to health and help them sustain that health
- Third, they need to facilitate the introduction of **attractors** that can catalyze positive neighborhood behaviors



The High Line is a example of an attractor that changed the trajectory of several NYC neighborhoods

- Two residents conceptualized it
- Public private partnership to raise capital and execute
- Repurposing of public infrastructure as an **attractor**



Brophy's Four Essentials to Neighborhood Revitalization are worth keeping in mind ...

- The United States is a **capitalist economic system**, and governments at all levels connect with that system primarily through incentives and regulations
- Neighborhood change— decline and improvement—is a function of citywide and metro-wide **market conditions**
- Within the city/regional market context, **neighborhoods compete with each other** for investment—residential and commercial
- In the weak-market places and some of those cities in the middle, the **decline of neighborhoods is often a bigger worry than gentrification**

... as are Brophy's rules ...

- **Rule 1:** Make sure an intervention **has enough heft** to make a significant change, which means lots of money and talent
- **Rule 2:** Improved delivery of social services can improve people's lives, but it **does not transform** distressed neighborhoods as places
- **Rule 3:** Improving distressed neighborhoods requires **the involvement of long-term residents, businesses, and institutions**, like churches; a clear vision and commitment to making the neighborhood (place) safe and attractive for existing residents and potential newcomers; and a **competent, mission-oriented real estate developer**

... and his thirteen principles

1. Efforts are targeted to a **place**
2. The intervention is based on a **shared vision** for the neighborhood with clear goals
3. The planning and execution process is participatory and **community-based**
4. The neighborhood improvement plan is **multidimensional**
5. The Plan needs to be **strategic and market savvy**
6. The improvement plan should work from whatever **strengths** that can be found in and around the neighborhood
7. The plan needs to focus on investment psychology, which means it must produce **visible results** in timely fashion
8. Goals and resources need to be **aligned**
9. The implementation of the plan needs to **leverage resources**
10. The organizations working to improve the neighborhood need to be **entrepreneurial** in spirit and deed
11. The implementation of the plan must have a **champion**
12. Someone with **legitimacy and trust** needs to orchestrate all of the players
13. Uninterrupted **momentum** is crucial

Purpose Built Communities applies an approach that has become a national model



PURPOSE BUILT COMMUNITIES MODEL

- Originated out of the East Lake revitalization project championed by Tom Cousins
 - East Lake has become a national model for place-based change
- Julian Robertson (Robertson Foundation) and Warren Buffett co-founded PBC in 2010 with Cousins
- **Focuses on introducing attractors** that are large enough that they can trigger transformational change **while protecting accessibility**

Michelle Matthews is the Chief Strategy and Operations Officer at Purpose Built Communities

- Michelle Matthews is the Chief Strategy & Operations Officer for Purpose Built Communities Foundation
- Prior to joining Purpose Built in 2016, Michelle founded Matthews Consulting Group (MCG). For more than two decades, she served as a trusted advisor with expertise in organizational development, change management and consulting
- Michelle's prowess in adapting to changing environments has positioned her as an authority in the field. She has been quoted in The Wall Street Journal, Black Enterprise and Smart Money, and she appeared on CNN where she shared her perspective on leadership and change
- Michelle graduated summa cum laude from Spelman College with a degree in economics

