

Today's Gowanus Is Tomorrow's Tribeca

Twenty under-the-radar microneighborhoods that may just be the Next Big Thing.

- By [S.Jhoanna Robledo](#)
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In a city that is, to quote the late, great Alistair Cooke, “the biggest collection of villages in the world,” what makes a village take off? What turns a non-neighborhood or a fledgling neighborhood or a forgotten, forlorn neighborhood into a Name Brand neighborhood? Sometimes, it takes just one big arrival—an overhauled cultural space (see: [Museum of the Moving Image, Astoria](#)), a signature building ([MiMA on Far West 42nd Street](#)), or a Zeitgeist-seizing restaurant ([Roberta's in Bushwick](#))—to shake a neighborhood from a stupor. Sometimes, as with [the High Line](#), the city steps in, providing much-needed capital to enliven an area's crumbling infrastructure. Other times, as with the damn-the-Superfund darlings [Gowanus](#) and [Greenpoint](#), the shift comes from basic free-market forces: outpriced renters seeking more space for less rent; shopkeepers needing bigger footprints; a demand for affordable places to shake it on a Saturday night. And it's also true that, sometimes, sleepers just suddenly wake up. (Good morning, [Flushing!](#)) Below you'll find twenty pockets around the city pulsing with the first stirrings, anyway, of rebirth. Think of them as villages in the making.

The Next Big Neighborhood:

- **1. The Higher Line** *Because the High Line Is About to Double in Size*
- **2. Manhattan Valley** *Because It's Suburbia With Subways*
- **3. Far West 42nd** *Because Despite Its Gawky Name, MiMA Is One Stunning Building*
- **4. Marcus Garvey Park** *Because It's Harlem's Answer to Madison Square Park*
- **5. Flushingstone** *Because Growthwise, It's Practically Shenzhen*
- **6. Superfund South (a.k.a. Gowanus)** *Because a Toxic Canal Is No Match for a Burgeoning Nightlife District*
- **7. Superfund North (a.k.a., Southeast Greenpoint)** *Because a Toxic Underground Blob Is No Match for a Big, Underutilized Park*
- **8. - 11. Four Micro-Microneighborhoods** *Because Look at All These New Storefronts*
- **12. Murray Bay** *Because It Just Awoke From a 50-Year Real-Estate Nap*
- **13. Hell's Roofdeck** *Because It's a No-Man's-Land No Longer*
- **14. South Astoria** *Because It's the Bowery in 2007*
- **15. Fort Fulton** *Because Brooklyn Is About to Get Its Own Union Square*
- **16. Robertsville (a.k.a. Bushwick)** *Because You Can Now Reap What the Locavore Pizzaioli Sowed*
- **17. Garment West** *Because It's Crane Crazy*
- **18. Lower East FiDi** *Because That Frank Gehry Building Is Having a Halo Effect*
- **19. Pro-Crown Heights** *Because It's Park Slope in 1991*

- **20. Hamilton Heights** *Because Soon, It'll Be Walking Distance From Columbia*

5. Flushingstone

(i.e., Where Flushing meets Whitestone)

Because growthwise, it's practically Shenzhen.

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It's far from Manhattan and far from fashionable, but that matters not a whit to the neighborhood's frenzied home buyers, who have been snapping up one and two-family homes, and renovating them, at a blistering pace. Last year, the Buildings Department issued 77 building permits in this swath of Queens, more than any other neighborhood in the city. And there's plenty of space left to develop. According to NYU's Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, 20.3 percent of buildable square footage is still available. Much of the activity is happening along leafy, low-scale thoroughfares, around 154th Street between 25th and 29th Avenues, far from the commotion of Northern Boulevard and Main Street's Chinatown but close enough to hit them up for a late-night dumpling fix.

<http://nymag.com/realestate/features/microneighborhoods/>

