



University at Buffalo  
School of Architecture  
and Planning

# The Beautiful Game

2026 Gensler Studio

NOVEMBER 17, 2025



# World Cup 2026

## Host Cities in USA, Canada, Mexico

Dallas: AT & T Stadium (92,967)  
New Jersey/ New York: MetLife Stadium (87,157)  
Atlanta: Mercedes-Benz Stadium (75,000)  
Los Angeles: SoFi Stadium (70,240)  
Miami: Hard Rock Stadium (67,518)  
Boston: Gillette Stadium (70,000)  
Houston: NRG Stadium (72,220)  
Vancouver: BC Place (54,500)  
Kansas City: Arrowhead Stadium (76,640)  
Seattle: Lumen Field (69,000)  
Toronto: BMO Field (45,736)  
San Francisco Bay Area: Levi Stadium (70,909)  
Philadelphia: Lincoln Financial Field (69,328)  
Mexico City: Estadio Azteca (87,523)  
Guadalajara: Estadio Akron (48,071)  
Monterrey: Estadio BBVA (53,460)

Via New York Times, Feb 4, 2024

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PARIS 2018

CELEBRATIONS AFTER A  
WORLD CUP MATCH



# “The ugly side of the beautiful game...”

## 2018 World Cup: Russia

### Environment

## World Cup Stadium Built Over Russian City's Last Rare Wildlife Habitat

Kaliningrad Stadium was built over October Island, which environmentalists describe as a "filter" for the polluted Pregolya River and a bird sanctuary.

By Ada Carr • June 19, 2018

## 2022 World Cup: Qatar

## Qatar: Abuse of World Cup workers exposed

First evidence of migrant exploitation on 2022 World Cup site

Migrant workers building Khalifa International Stadium in Doha for the 2022 World Cup have suffered systematic abuses, in some cases forced labour, Amnesty International reveals in a new report published today.

The report, *“The ugly side of the beautiful game: Labour exploitation on a Qatar 2022 World Cup venue”*, blasts FIFA's shocking indifference to appalling treatment of migrant workers. The number of people working on World Cup sites is set to surge almost ten-fold to around 36,000 in the next two years.



# 2022 World Cup Stadiums in Qatar



Via ArchDaily, 2022  
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# Levi's Stadium Rooftop Farm and Garden



HOME OF THE 49ERS  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



# SoFi Stadium

tadium

HOME OF THE RAMS  
LOS ANGELES



# FIFA Stadium Design Guidelines on Sustainability

INSIDE **FIFA**®



FIFA.com

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: 2023–2027

WHAT FIFA DOES

ORGANISATION


MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

CAMPAIGNS

REPORTS & DOCUMENTS

FIFA RANKINGS

[Innovation](#) > ... > [Design](#) > 2. Design overview > 2.1 Using technology to drive the design > 2.2 Orientation > 2.3 Stadium bowl > 2.4 Turf and pitch design > 2.5 Roof > 2.6 Facade > [2.7 Sustainability](#) > 2.8 Accessibility > 2.9 Future proofing

 Innovation

Design

**2.7 Sustainability**



# United Nations SDGs



# United Nations SDGs





# Statement on Ecology and Biodiversity (FIFA)

The ecological value of land is a measure of how much biodiversity it can support. Biodiversity is the amount and variety of plant and animal life on the land. Stadium designers can help reduce declines in biodiversity around the world through the sustainable sourcing of construction materials and by increasing the amount of planting in, on and around stadiums.

As discussed in Sub-Section 1.3.5, **stadiums should not be built on areas of high ecological value**, and areas of the stadium site that have a high ecological value should be preserved. **Stadiums should not be built with products that cause biodiversity loss.** Special care should be taken with wood products. Stadium designers should never use tropical hardwoods or any wood that is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) “red list”. It is recommended that all timber used in a stadium project has an internationally recognised sustainable sourcing certificate.

**Large stadium sites often present the opportunity to create green corridors within a local area.** Green corridors are areas of planting on the site that connect to adjacent planted sites, helping wildlife to move between them.

As well as enhancing biodiversity, planting delivers positive messaging, reduces air pollution in its location, and has a cooling effect and absorbs CO<sub>2</sub>. **One of the most popular ways to deliver planting on stadium developments is in the form of “green” facades and roofs.** The weight of these features should be considered, especially on long-span structures, as the additional structural material and its embodied carbon counteracts some of the benefits of the planting.

**Stadium designers could consider creating habitats that encourage local wildlife to thrive, such as bird and bat boxes and insect hotels.** The most suitable type of habitat creation will vary depending on the region. These features can also be used to help connect with younger supporters and for educational purposes within the community. Care should be taken to place wildlife habitats away from areas that will be disturbed by crowds or light pollution from the stadium.

(FIFA: <https://inside.fifa.com/innovation/stadium-guidelines/general-process-guidelines/design/sustainability-design>)

## Mixed-use Soccer Stadium



Soccer stadium + housing, by JKMM Architects, Finland

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# MoMA: Built Ecologies documentary series


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For most architects, a space is usually designed with humans in mind. But as much as people have dominated the world, we also have to think about other species that play an essential role in our ecosystem. According to Joyce Hwang, architect and associate professor at the University of Buffalo, animals are all around us; it is a "default condition" of our world, making it imperative that we include them in the way we design our built environment. In the



<https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/748>



# Silo City Trellis by UB Ecological Practices Studios



**FACULTY: LAURA GAROFALO (FALL 2019), JOYCE HWANG (SPRING 2020)**  
**NICK RAJKOVICH (FALL 2020)**



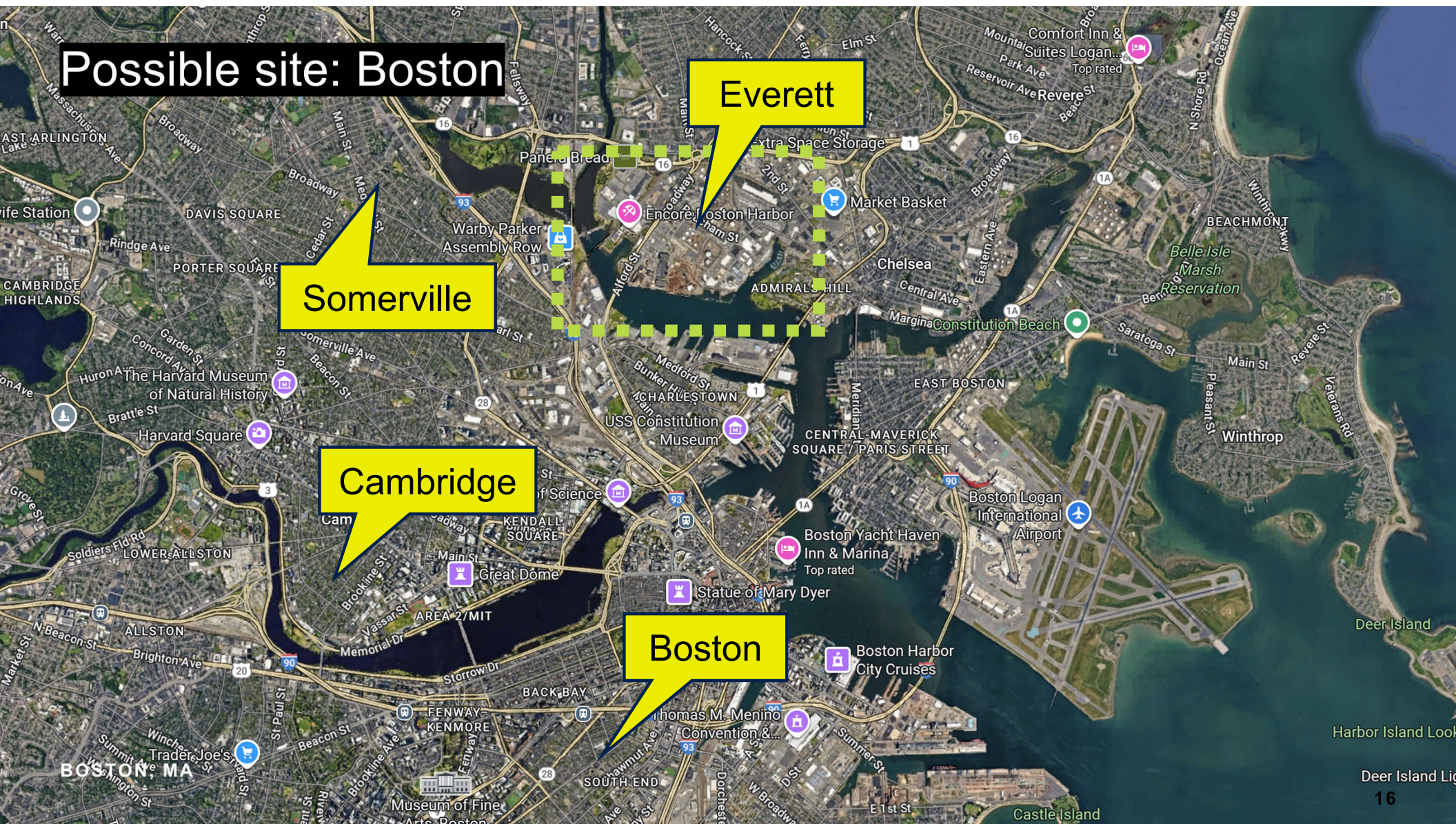
Possible site: Boston

Everett

Somerville

Cambridge

Boston







New England Revs Stadium site  
= Former Mystic Generating  
Station Power Plant (closed  
June 1, 2024)



# Current development challenges

NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION

## Wu calls Kraft Group's proposed agreement over Revolution stadium an 'unserious offer'

"The Krafts had to be dragged kicking and screaming to include the City of Boston in these conversations."



Sources: Boston.com and WBUR Boston

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CAPTION GOES HERE  
SECOND LINE GOES HERE



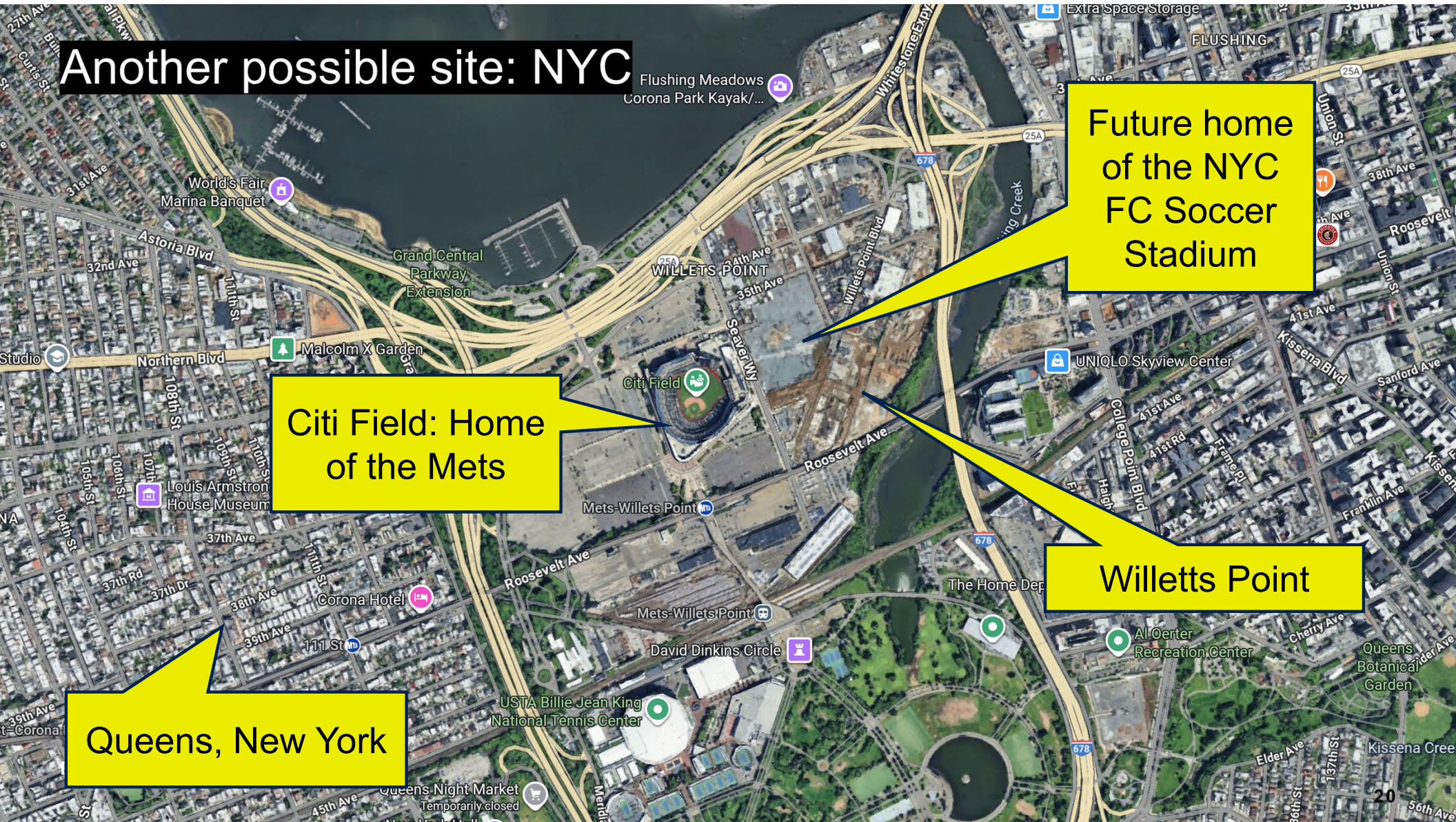
Another possible site: NYC

Future home  
of the NYC  
FC Soccer  
Stadium

Citi Field: Home  
of the Mets

Willetts Point

Queens, New York





Studio sponsor

**Gensler**

# Gensler

## **Eric Brill, AIA, LEED AP BD+C Studio Director, Principal New York City**

UB Alum!

Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Design,  
UB School of Architecture and Planning

## **Steve Chung, AIA, LEED AP Sports Leader, Design Director, Principal Los Angeles**

Some relevant projects: Snapdragon Stadium, San Diego State University's new 35,000-seat football stadium, BMO Stadium for the Los Angeles Football Club, the Philadelphia Eagles' Lincoln Financial Field, San Jose State University's Spartan Recreation and Aquatic Center, Renovation of Crypto.com Arena, formerly the Staples Center, home to four professional sports franchises including the Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Clippers, WNBA's Los Angeles Sparks, and NHL's Los Angeles Kings.

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# Save the Dates for Travel!

- **Field trip to Boston (or NYC): Friday Jan 30 to Monday Feb 2, 2026**
  - Site visit
  - Archi-touring
  - Discussion with stakeholders
- **Final Review at Gensler office in NYC: Monday May 4, 2026**

**\*\*\*Trips will be subsidized by Gensler sponsorship!**

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2026 Gensler Studio  
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