NYU's East Village
An Ongoing Project to Create NYU's extended urban campus

The East Village is home to New York City's highest concentration of bars and clubs with over 115 active licenses in zip 10009 (containing the neighborhood of "Alphabet City"). The majority of these have opened in the last 20 years, and coincide with major efforts by the city to increase property values in the neighborhood.

Fueling the rapid increase in bars and clubs in Alphabet City is New York University (NYU). The university has expanded aggressively into the surrounding neighborhoods, adding over 3.5 million square feet of residence halls, academic facilities, and administrative offices since 2000. Alongside the physical expansion, the student population has increased to over 50,000, and with many of the students wanting to live near campus the cost of renting in Alphabet City has dramatically following the university's expansion. The expansion has raised property values and systematically replaces the neighborhoods' iconic low rise walk-ups with massive dormitories, all to the effect of transforming the East Village into NYU's personal college-town. And the expansion is planned to continue with more intensity than ever. According to the campus master plan NYU plans on building or acquiring of 240,000 square feet per year until 2030, bringing the university's total square footage to over 8 million square feet.

Examining NYU's growth alongside major events in the East Village reveals a collaborative project 50 years in the making by the city and NYU to transform the East Village and Alphabet City into an extension of NYU's urban campus.