

# Hanneke van Deursen

With a background in architecture and policy research, I lead work that is shaping new policy and financing mechanisms for affordable housing. Fluent in affordable housing policy and finance, I am driven to design a more efficient and equitable system where local government plays an active role in housing development.

## EDUCATION

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**Harvard University Graduate School of Design**, Master in Design Studies: Narratives *Aug 2021- May 2023*

A post-professional research degree that enabled me to take courses across Harvard's graduate schools, pursuing interests in Affordable Housing Policy, Development Finance, Financialization, and Architecture. Select writings:

- “The Impact of Financial Architecture: Comparing LIHTC and Social Housing to Find an Affordable Housing Solution,” Money Design and Inequality, Professor Desan, Law School, 2023.
- “Conditions of Access: The Rights of the Public in London’s Largest Development,” Public Space, Professor Kayden, School of Design, 2023.
- “The Tale of Two Houses: Is Housing a Social Good or a Financial Asset?” Warren Center Research Seminar, Capitalisms Hardwiring: Money, Credit, and Finance in a Globalizing World, Law School, 2023.
- “From the Tools We Have: Building Up a Social Housing Sector in the United States without Changing Everything,” U.S. Housing Markets, Problems, and Policies, Professor Herbert, Kennedy School, 2023.
- ““Economics are the Method; the Object is to Change the Heart and Soul”: Space and Subjectivity under Neoliberal Capitalism” Thesis. [Film](#) by Hanneke van Deursen and Critical Essay by Matthew Lopez, 2023.

**Syracuse University School of Architecture**, Bachelor of Architecture *Aug 2015 - May 2020*

- Summa Cum Laude with Honors, GPA 3.94/4.0
- Full-tuition Syracuse Architecture scholarship.
- Thesis: “Truth Games: Naturalizing the Neoliberal Subject.” Case studies on the political, economic, and spatial conditions of Hudson Yards in New York, Canary Wharf in London, and Kop van Zuid in Rotterdam.

## EXPERIENCE

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**City of Chattanooga**, Director of Housing Finance, Chattanooga, TN *Mar 2025 - Present*  
Bloomberg Harvard City Hall Fellow *Aug 2023 – Mar 2025*

Starting as an externally-funded Fellow with no formal authority, I built relationships across departments, invented unique policy solutions, and acted as a change-agent within City Hall. I became a key member of the City’s first Affordable Housing Policy Team and led a portfolio of initiatives that repositioned Chattanooga as a national model for local housing innovation.

### Key Initiatives:

- **Founded Invest Chattanooga** Conceived, structured, and launched a \$20 million public enterprise that uses flexible, low-cost capital and strategic public-private partnerships to produce financially sustainable, mixed-income housing with permanent affordability that the market alone cannot deliver.
  - Built energy and support for the approach with City Hall leaders, local philanthropic partners, the Housing Authority, and City Council. Championed it as an efficient, local solution that would create permanently affordable housing without relying on federal subsidies. Passed unanimously.

- Designed institutional architecture and governance, partnering with the Chattanooga Housing Authority to establish the organization as a wholly-owned subsidiary.
- Calibrated affordability targets (20% at 50% AMI; 10% at 80% AMI) through local market analysis.
- Recognized nationally as the third city to establish a public investment fund for housing.
- **Redesigned the Affordable Housing PILOT Program** Created the nation's first tax incentive directly tied to the cost of providing affordable units.
  - Developed a [PILOT Calculator](#) linking tax abatements to the depth of affordability, transforming a blunt instrument into a calibrated tool for inclusionary housing. Passed unanimously.
  - Guided the first project through council approval: a 278-unit, Class-A riverfront development with 42 affordable units. Chattanooga's first private mixed-income project with 60% AMI units.
- **Expanded Local Housing Tools**
  - Secured zoning code reforms to expand housing development options: a 40% reduction in minimum lot sizes for small multifamily and broader inclusion of missing-middle housing in residential zones.
  - Successfully lobbied the state housing finance agency to overhaul its QAP, making Chattanooga competitive for 9% LIHTC awards.
  - Partnered with the Housing Authority to activate Restore Rebuild (Faircloth-to-RAD), unlocking up to 1,800 new project-based vouchers.
  - Persuaded HUD grants team to update their HOME funds policies, closing on 82 affordable units.
  - Updated local codes to enable single-stair multifamily housing and ease code requirements on triplexes and fourplexes, with buy-in secured from the Fire Department and Land Development Office.
- **Informed the Mayor's Budget Strategy**
  - Led the citywide property tax impact analysis following a reassessment, presenting tradeoffs between resident tax burdens and city revenue following a period of record and uneven growth in property values.
  - Developed educational materials for City Council and the public.
  - Secured \$8M in new affordable housing funding through data-driven budget recommendations.

**Invest Chattanooga**, General Project Manager, Chattanooga, TN

*Jan 2025 - Present*

- Led the CEO search, recruiting a visionary and capable leader to guide the organization.
- Co-developed the inaugural strategic plan with the CEO, defining mission and vision, investment structure, financial and organizational goals, governance and control requirements, and public benefit metrics.
- Drafted the Request for Information to solicit developer proposals for investment.

**Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies**, Graduate Research Assistant, Cambridge, MA

*Jun 2022 – Aug 2023*

- Led an independent research project with over twenty interviews, resulting in a two-part study published by the Joint Center, “The People’s Housing: *Woningcorporaties* and the Dutch Social Housing System.”
- The first part is historical, tracing the system through 150 years of evolution; the second part is practical, outlining the institutional structure, governance, and financing mechanisms of the contemporary model.
- Made the Dutch system accessible to an international audience seeking innovative affordable housing models.

**Slash Objects**, Production Assistant, Brooklyn, NY

*Apr 2021 – Jul 2021*

- Produced a range of design products, managed fulfillment, collaborated on new product design, art direction.

**Studio Ames**, Designer, New York, NY

*Mar 2021 – Apr 2021*

- Installed “Linne Occulte: Drawing Architecture” exhibition, Citygroup Gallery. Designed model and brochure.

**SPORTS Collaborative**, Design Intern, Syracuse, NY*Sep 2019 – Dec 2019*

- Created models, drawings, and design iterations for winning architecture competition entries. Attached 160 felt strips to gantry cranes for the “Ceiling Unlimited” installation at the Architecture League Beaux Arts Ball 2019.

**Architecture Office**, Architectural Intern, Syracuse, NY*Jan 2017 – May 2019*

- Created architectural models and drawings for various design and research projects, including the *Swissness Applied* exhibition and book project on the transformation of European immigrant towns in the United States.

**Powerhouse Company**, Technical Consultant, Rotterdam, Netherlands

Architectural Intern

*Sep 2018 – Dec 2018**May 2018 – Aug 2018*

- Worked on the design development for a luxury hunting lodge in the Austrian Alps; iterated on design, managed project timeline, produced presentation books, and coordinated communication between teams.
- Founding member of Architecture/Finance research team, which later developed into a studio at Independent School for the City.

**SELECT WRITING**

**Joint Center for Housing Studies:** “The People’s Housing: Woningcorporaties and the Dutch Social Housing System - Part 1: The History.”

*Dutch Social Housing**Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University*, June 2023.

**Joint Center for Housing Studies:** “The People’s Housing: Woningcorporaties and the Dutch Social Housing System - Part 2: The Mechanics.”

*Dutch Social Housing**Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University*, August 2023.

**Shelterforce:** “Affordable Housing Finance 101.” *Shelterforce*, May, 2025.

*Affordable Housing Finance*

**National League of Cities:** “Chattanooga’s PILOT Reimagined: Honing a Powerful Housing Tool.” *National League of Cities*, January, 2025.

*Chattanooga PILOT***SELECT PRESS**

**Urban Institute:** Hornung, Daniel, and Aaron Shroyer. *Affordable Abundance: How State and Local Governments Are Pairing Abundance-Style Reforms with Affordability Incentives*. Research Report. Urban Institute, 2025.

*Invest Chattanooga / Chattanooga PILOT*

**National Housing Crisis Task Force:** Williams, Paul, Ashwin Warrior, Chelsea Andrews, Ken Silverman, Lourdes Castro Ramirez, and Michael Saadine. “Mixed-Income Development Model: Montgomery County, Chicago, Atlanta, and Chattanooga.” *National Housing Crisis Task Force*, 2025.

*Invest Chattanooga*

**National Housing Crisis Task Force:** Saadine, Michael, Andrew Gibbs, and Florian Schallol. “Chattanooga’s PILOT Program.” *National Housing Crisis Task Force*, 2025.

*Chattanooga PILOT***SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

- **Conference Panelist:** “From Chicago to Chattanooga: Building Affordable Housing Without Traditional Subsidies,” Housing Action Illinois, Housing Matters Conference October, 2025

*Invest Chattanooga*

- **Conference Panelist:** “Stacked for Impact: How Affordable Housing Deals Get Done,” Sycamore Institute, Housing Policy Summit, September, 2025.

*Affordable Housing Finance*

- **Presentation:** Washington State Senate, Housing Committee: Financing & Decreasing Barriers to Constructing Affordable Housing, *September, 2025*. *Chattanooga PILOT*
- **Guest Lecture:** “International Perspectives on Social Housing,” Harvard University Kennedy School, (Re)Envisioning Social Housing in the US with Professor Chris Herbert, *September 2025*. *Dutch Social Housing*
- **Webinar Panelist:** Navigating Uncertainty in Federal Funding Streams for Housing, New York University Furman Center, *July 2025*. *Section 8 Economic Impact White Paper*
- **Presentation:** “8 Steps to Creating a Public Development Agency,” Housing Forward Virginia, Rise of the Enterprise: Public Development Models for Housing Across the Nation, *July 2025*. *Invest Chattanooga*
- **Presentation:** “Affordable Housing Innovation in Chattanooga, TN (PILOT),” HUD, Brownbag Discussion, *June 2025*. *Chattanooga PILOT*
- **Presentation:** “Tax Abatements and Land Disposition (PILOT),” Daniel Hornung and Aaron Shroyer, Attainable Housing Seminar, *May 2025*. *Chattanooga PILOT*
- **Presentation:** “City Hall Fellowship Impact,” Bloomberg Philanthropies, Selected Fellowship Presentations, *April 2025*. *My Work in Chattanooga*
- **Conference Panelist:** “Rowing in the Same Direction: Aligning Housing Policy With Real Estate Financing to Get the Intended Results for Your City,” U.S. Housing Conference and Community Development Conference, *April 2025*. *Affordable Housing Finance*
- **Conference Panelist:** “Creating a Local Engine for Housing Production: A New Kind of Public-Private Partnership,” U.S. Housing Conference and Community Development Conference, *April 2025*. *Invest Chattanooga*
- **Presentation:** “The Eight Steps to Creating a Public Development Agency,” Center for Public Enterprise, Public Development Community of Practice, *March 2025*. *Invest Chattanooga*
- **Guest Lecture:** “International Comparison: Netherlands,” University of California Berkeley, Contemporary Social Housing Practice in the US and Abroad with Professor Ben Metcalf, *March 2025*. *Dutch Social Housing*
- **Guest Lecture:** “International Comparison: Netherlands,” Harvard University Kennedy School, New Visions for Social Housing in the US with Professor Chris Herbert, *February 2025*. *Dutch Social Housing*
- **Presentation:** “Power Hour on Affordable Housing Innovation in Chattanooga, Knoxville and Nashville,” ULI Nashville, Housing Action Council, *December 2024*. *Chattanooga PILOT*
- **Webinar Panelist:** Unlocking Potential: Social Housing as a Catalyst for Accessible, Affordable Living, Brandeis University Community Living Policy, *December 2024*. *Dutch Social Housing*
- **Webinar Panelist:** Social Housing in Europe: Which aspects are transferable to the US housing delivery system?, American Institute of Architects, *December 2024*. *Dutch Social Housing*
- **Conference Panelist:** “The Risks and Rewards of Publicly Driven Housing Development,” Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management, Fall Research Conference, *November 2024*. *Invest Chattanooga*
- **Presentation:** “Chattanooga’s Affordable Housing PILOT,” Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Accelerating Community Investment Community of Practice, *December 2024*. *Chattanooga PILOT*
- **Conference Panelist:** “Enabling the public sector for the long haul,” Center for Public Enterprise Public Development Day Session, *November, 2023*. *Dutch Social Housing*

## TEACHING AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

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**Harvard University Graduate School of Design**, Design Discovery Virtual Instructor, Cambridge, MA *Jun 2023*

- Taught a three-week intro course for those interested in architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design.

**Harvard University Law School**, Research Assistant, Cambridge, MA *Jan 2022 – Jun 2023*

- After taking Professor Christine Desan's course *The Legal Architecture of Globalization: Money, Debt, and Development*, I developed diagrams for her courses on the legal design of money the architecture of institutions.

**Harvard University**, Teaching Fellow, Cambridge, MA *Aug 2022 – May 2023*

- Instructor for *Design Speculations*, a thesis prep course for Design Studies seniors in the Department of History of Art and Architecture. Taught weekly classes and advised four students, two of whom received thesis prizes.

**Harvard University Graduate School of Design**, Research Assistant, Cambridge, MA *Nov 2022 – May 2023*

- Synthesized Professor Diane Davis's urban sociology writing for publication and organized her scholarship.

**Harvard University**, Teaching Assistant, Cambridge, MA *Jan 2022 – May 2022*

- Provided support, led software tutorials, and gave critiques for an undergraduate architectural design studio.

**Syracuse University School of Architecture**, Undergraduate Teaching Aid, Syracuse, NY *Aug 2019 - May 2020*

- Taught a section of twenty first-year students together with a graduate TA in manual drawing (Fall) and digital drawing (Spring) in both studio settings and in the field.

**Syracuse University School of Architecture**, Tutor, Syracuse, NY *Aug 2017 - May 2019*

- Course tutor for Building Systems and Architectural Theory, available to all students for extra support.

## AWARDS

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- Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston Affordable Housing Development Competition, first prize *2022*
- Dean's Citation for Excellence in Thesis Design, "Truth Games: Naturalizing the Neoliberal Subject" *2020*
- Luther Gifford Prize in Architecture, highest academic standing in design, Syracuse University *2020*
- Alpha Rho Chi Medal, professional merit in service, leadership, and academics, Syracuse University *2020*
- AIA Henry Adams Certificate, highest academic ranking, Syracuse University School of Architecture *2020*
- Renée Crown University Honors Thesis Grant, films on Canary Wharf, Hudson Yards, Kop van Zuid *2019*
- King + King Architects Prize for Integrated Studio Project, first place *2019*
- Professor's Award for Academic Achievement, first place, ethnographic essays *2018*

## SKILLS

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**Core Competencies:** Creative Problem-Solving and Design Thinking, Affordable Housing Finance, Systems Design, Research, Data Analysis and Visualization, Storytelling, Visual Communication and Graphic Design, Teaching and Accessible Explanation, Relationship-Building, Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Project Management.

**Languages:** English (native), Dutch (native), Spanish (basic).

**Software:** Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop, Rhino, Obsidian.