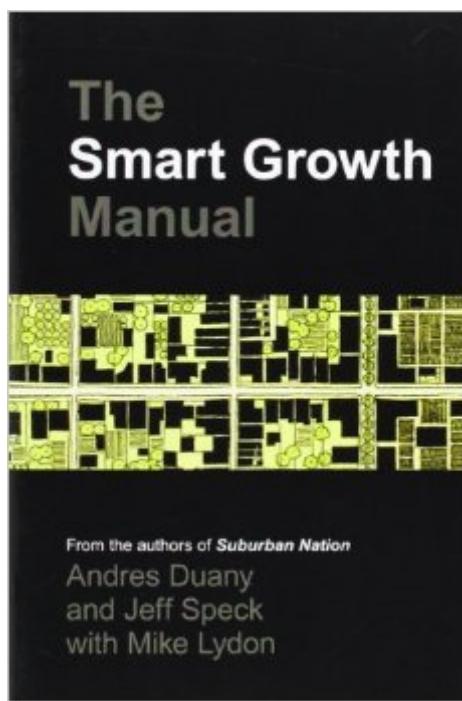


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The Smart Growth Manual



Synopsis

Everyone is calling for smart growth...but what exactly is it? In *The Smart Growth Manual*, two leading city planners provide a thorough answer. From the expanse of the metropolis to the detail of the window box, they address the pressing challenges of urban development with easy-to-follow advice and broad array of best practices. With their landmark book *Suburban Nation*, Andres Duany and Jeff Speck "set forth more clearly than anyone has done in our time the elements of good town planning" (*The New Yorker*). With this long-awaited companion volume, the authors have organized the latest contributions of new urbanism, green design, and healthy communities into a comprehensive handbook, fully illustrated with the built work of the nation's leading practitioners. "The Smart Growth Manual is an indispensable guide to city planning. This kind of progressive development is the only way to fully restore our economic strength and create new jobs, new industries, and a renewed ability to compete in the first rank of world economies." -- Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco "Authors Andres Duany, Jeff Speck, and Mike Lydon have created *The Smart Growth Manual*, a resource which not only explains the overarching ideals of smart growth, but a manual that takes the time to show smart growth principles at each geographic scale (region, neighborhood, street, building). I highly recommend [it] as a part of any community participant's or urban planner's desktop references." -- LocalPlan.org

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Customer Reviews

[...].Authors Andres Duany, Jeff Speck, and Mike Lydon have created The Smart Growth Manual, a resource which not only explains the overarching ideals of smart growth, but a manual that takes the time to show smart growth principles at each geographic scale (region, neighborhood, street, building). The Smart Growth Manual bounces back and forth (in a beautifully organized manner) between steps for the implementation of smart growth and key concepts. The format of The Smart Growth Manual allows for each concept to be referenced and reviewed quickly (each concept is explained in about half a page).I found The Smart Growth Manual to be the type of reference that you would throw in your bag before heading to your community association meeting or grab on your way to a city council hearing about a new development. The information is presented in such a simplistic, uncluttered format that you can use it almost like a dictionary. Instead of wondering whether a particular idea really is smart growth you can flip to it in the manual and understand how the concept would work and how it relates to other principles of smart growth. More importantly it can be used to better articulate community goals through providing an accessible guide to smart growth in an attainable format for charrettes, community meetings, etc.To make The Smart Growth Manual all the more enticing, the pages are printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper and it's pretty much pocket sized (so you don't have to lug around yet another huge manual in addition to ordinances and the like). The pages feature vivid illustrations and photographs of each concept so it's not a struggle to understand or explain a concept. I highly recommend The Smart Growth Manual as a part of any community participant's or urban planner's desktop references.

Duany and company are architects so their focus on design is highly useful. Echoing other on-the-ball reviewers here, the book is very well organized, easy to follow and leads directly to application.If the authors ever read customer comments, I would like to suggest the following should the book be updated:1. Our country's population is growing, but it also aging. Over the next 20 years, the aging of the population may be more significant to planners than "just" growth (which is inevitable, despite the silly claims of other reviewers). There has to be a "Smart Aging" perspective this country needs to adopt because older Americans have different needs--not lesser needs, different needs that should be addressed.2. Include a section on the behavioral side of Smart Growth--while a necessary component of getting people out of their cars, design by itself is insufficient to get people out of their cars. What incentives, what kind of education and outreach needs to take place for the public and, perhaps most importantly, elected officials. Most local officials aren't particularly brave. They need help.

As the newest member of my town's Historic and Design Review Commission, I've been scrambling to become better-acquainted with architectural terms and philosophies. Because my area of expertise is in landscaping, and I'm primarily on the commission to help evaluate the landscape plans, I've been feeling behind when it comes time to comment on the buildings themselves or the relationships between the buildings and their surroundings. I've also been working to understand the goals behind many of the city's policies so I can best help analyze the plans that come before me, in light of what the city hopes to achieve. The Smart Growth Manual has been an invaluable tool in becoming familiar with the basic concepts of smart growth that my city seems committed to. Each page has a couple of paragraphs on a specific concept, along with a photo illustrating an ideal or not-so-ideal example of it. The writing is smooth and clear, and it is written in jargon-free language that's easy to understand even after a long day of hard physical work. I expected that as a layman, not an architect, I might struggle to understand some of the terms or concepts, but the beauty of this book is in its simplicity. I read it in three sittings, and have gone back and paged through it multiple times since finishing it to re-absorb the most compelling and relevant concepts. After reading, many of the policies and projects my city is working on made more sense, and I was able to understand more deeply WHY certain projects were so important and what the end results would be in creating a livable, walkable, human-scale town. If you're looking for simple, common-sense explanations of planning concepts, this book is an excellent place to start. You won't come away an expert, but this is a thorough, approachable book that gives you a broad overview of a variety of important concepts in the field.

This book is likely to change things. It works from both sides: for planners and politicians to teach themselves and others, and for citizens concerned about what planners might do. It will help planners get new visions across. And help them ease valid citizen concerns and even NIMBY concerns. It conveys concepts by showing reality ... which sounds very good no matter what side you are on. I studied urban planning 30+ years ago and walked away from it as it seemed more wrong than right. This book will go a long way to making things right.

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