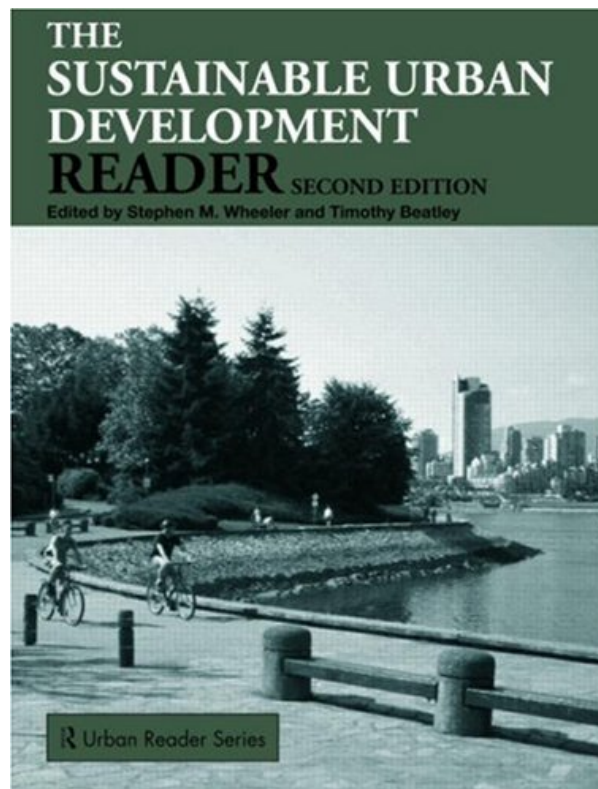


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THE SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT READER

SECOND EDITION

Edited by Stephen M. Wheeler and Timothy Beatley



R Urban Reader Series

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Review

Sustainable urban development is the frontier of the 21st century....This book is a superb collection of classic essays and contemporary work. Highly recommended!.

–David W. Orr, Oberlin College

This is the book that scholars and students interested in connecting sustainability and city and regional planning have been waiting for. The authors' presentation of important theoretical ideas and current applications artfully unites two fields that have much to learn from each other.

–Katherine Cushing, San Jose State University

A discerning selection of key ideas and strong editorial support on key urban sustainability themes, combined with case-study and inspirational student exercise sections will ensure this book will form a key text in my program.

–Colin Elliot, Heriot-Watt University

The volume may be used as a textbook, but it doesn't feel like one.

–Planning, 10/01/2004

About the Author

Stephen M. Wheeler is Assistant professor in the Department of Environmental Design at The University of California at Davis, and Timothy Beatley is Professor of Sustainable Communities in the school of Architecture at the university of Virginia.

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Building on the success of its first edition, the second edition of the Sustainable Urban Development Reader expands its selection of classic material on sustainable community development. As in the previous edition, it begins by tracing the roots of the sustainable development concept in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, before presenting classic readings on a number of dimensions of the sustainability concept.

Topics covered include land use and urban design, transportation, ecological planning and restoration, energy and materials use, economic development, social and environmental justice, and green architecture and building. All sections have a concise editorial introduction that places the selection in context and suggests further reading. Additional sections cover tools for sustainable development, sustainable development internationally, visions of sustainable community and case studies from around the world. The book also includes educational exercises for individuals, university classes, or community groups, and an extensive list of recommended readings.

The anthology remains unique in presenting a broad array of classic readings in this field, each with a concise introduction placing it within the context of this evolving discourse. It includes updated material on:

- global warming
- issues in less developed countries
- ecotourism
- prospects for sustainable development in China
- megacities
- case studies of sustainable development.

The Sustainable Urban Development Reader presents an authoritative overview of the field using original sources in a highly readable format for university classes in urban studies, environmental studies, the social sciences, and related fields. It also makes a wide range of sustainable urban planning-related material available to the public in a clear and accessible way, forming an indispensable resource for anyone interested in the future of urban environments.

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Most helpful customer reviews

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Great Book

By B. Wolinsky

During one of my rough days as a substitute teacher, I got the idea of having the class look up their favorite city on Google-Earth, hoping to kill time until the bell rang. One of them picked Los Angeles, and inquired about the “gray thing” running through the city. “That’s the Los Angeles river” I told him. More questions followed about why it was that color, and I explained that he was looking at concrete. The river runs through a man-made concrete bank, designed to conserve the water and prevent flooding. The next question was “how come there’s no water in it?” and I replied “LA is arid, so the river’s usually dry.” More questions, this time on how they can fill all those swimming pools.

The fact of the matter is, throughout the USA, we have cities that are not naturally sustainable. LA was nothing until the dams and aqueducts came in, and even today you’d think they’d have a water shortage. Same thing with Las Vegas, Phoenix, El Paso, and just about every other city in the Southwest. So many of our cities grew up from unnatural beginnings, with no plan for how they’d get food, water, or building materials, nor any plan for bringing them in.

One of the first essays is Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic, written in the 1940’s. The conservationist discusses communities setting rules for land use, agreeing on the best way to save water, dispose of waste, and take care of all the environmental issues that will effect the people. Unfortunately, his essay stresses “community” which doesn’t always suffice. If an industrialist wants to put a factory in a community, he can bypass their laws by applying to the state for eminent domain. The same holds true for water use; it is usually up to the state, not the community. Take for instance the recent controversy with the village of Kiryas Joel in upstate New York. The village wants to drill wells into the aqueduct, and the surrounding residents claim this will

deplete the aquifer which all of them are using. One community's needs may trump the other's.

Fast forward to 1993 with Peter Calthorpe's *The Next American Metropolis*. He argues that car use has increased, leading to greater sprawl (or vice versa.) His argument is that while Americans were car-dependent back in the 70's (OPEC embargo as proof) we were driving a lot less than we are now. Commutes were shorter, and houses were smaller, but as Americans desired bigger homes, the builders took their blueprints out into the sticks. He cites "traditional" neighborhoods, with tightly packed townhouses, where everyone gets along and you can walk to the store, school, and library, but this did not work in post WWII USA. According to him, Americans liked the feeling of privacy, so a private backyard made sense. A swimming pool in the backyard would definitely ice the cake of suburbia, along with a nice big private driveway, and a front yard to seclude the house from the street. But when you add those things together, you get increased auto traffic, water use, and lack of sociability. In New Jersey there's a beautiful town of wooden homes called Ocean Grove, and it's definitely a sociable community. But it would not work everywhere. A lot of people still want private houses.

The Sustainable Urban Development Reader is a collection of writings on this topic. One of the greatest things about it is that it doesn't draw any conclusions, that's left to the scholar. There's no sense in arguing that the desert is infertile or that New Orleans has poor drainage, those are facts. What the book does is it collects articles on sustainability going back decades, all the way to the days when some of our greatest cities barely existed.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

An interesting read that I may read outside of class-assigned chapters

By Amazon Customer

An interesting read that highlights sections of various articles, reports and books that have been written on subjects related to sustainable development.

The book was in decent condition with no writing or highlighting and a normal amount of wear from a couple semesters of use.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Out of print?

By Peter G. Buckley

I'm usually resistant to assigning books or documents when I believe that the class could be better served by my own online selection. However I would have assigned this if it was still in print. A very good selection and very clear introductions

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