

City Design: Modernist, Traditional, Green and Systems Perspectives

By Jonathan Barnett

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City Design: Modernist, Traditional, Green and Systems Perspectives By Jonathan Barnett

City Design describes the history and current practice of the four most widely accepted approaches to city design: the Modernist city of towers and highways that, beginning in the 1920s, has come to dominate urban development worldwide but is criticized as mechanical and soul-less; the Traditional organization of cities as streets and public places, scorned by the modernists, but being revived today for its human scale; Green city design, whose history can be traced back thousands of years in Asia, but is becoming increasingly important everywhere as sustainability and the preservation of the planet are recognized as basic issues, and finally Systems city design, which includes infrastructure and development regulation but also includes computer aided techniques which give designers new tools for managing the complexity of cities.

This new, revised edition of *City Design* includes a larger format and improved interior design allowing for better image quality. The author has also included wider global coverage and context with more international examples throughout, as well as new coverage on designing for informal settlements and new research conclusions about the immediacy of sea level rise and other climate change issues that affect cities, which sharpen the need for design measures discussed in the book.

Authoritative yet accessible, *City Design* covers complicated issues of theory and practice, and its approach is objective and inclusive. This is a comprehensive text on city design ideal for planners, landscape architects, urban designers and those who want to understand how to improve cities.

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Editorial Review

Review

"In *City Design* Jonathan Barnett, who is well known and highly regarded as both an educator and practitioner, has developed an informative textbook covering the history and thought behind urban design and its effect on contemporary cities, concluding with a proposed future of city design….

"The strength of *City Design* is Barnett's brilliance at documenting the lineage of urban design thought in an accessible and engaging manner. Throughout, Barnett includes a contextual and historical background that places the shape of the city and the thoughts of those trying to change the form of the city within the context of the time, Moreover, Barnett incorporates examples of the "nuts and bolts' of planning tools, each of which ties abstract ideas to the real world context of planning and design…

"City Design will be an informative text for urban planning and design students attempting to grasp the fundamentals of urban design and planning history and the effects from pre-history to contemporary times on the shape of our cities." – Sarah P. Church. University of British Columbia, *Journal of Planning Education and Research,* Fall, 2013

"Jonathan Barnett is a believer (as am I) that architectural ideas have had a vital role in shaping cities. To bolster his assertion he lays out in *City Design* a rich history of the styles, movements, and ideas that have shaped cities from the Renaissance forward. He puts in context everything from "garden cities" to "megastructures" and places these movements in the broader arc of civic history. Particularly interesting is Barnett's interweaving of landscape design and architecture, since few books have looked at the interdependence of the two fields and their effects on city design."– *Craig Whitaker, Architectural Record*

"According to Jonathan Barnett, FAICP, there are four different kinds of city design, and each has its insights and its blind spots. It will take more than one to meet such challenges as climate change, unprecedented growth, and the "inability of local institutions and a wide range of respected design professionals to respond effectively" to major city-design issues following 9/11 and Katrina….The book is brisk, straightforward, and magisterial, and the author, a professor in the University of Pennsylvania's Urban Design Program, seems to have been everywhere, read everything, and assessed it with precision (and without wasting words)….Perhaps this instant classic can do for the rancorous partisanship of city design what no one has been able to do for national politics." - *Planning magazine*

"The design of cities is a significant social and environmental issue in this first urban century. In response, Jonathan Barnett provides two valuable syntheses. First, he succinctly identifies three pressing city-design challenges. Next, Barnett analyzes the hopes and shortcomings of modern, traditional, environmental, and systems approaches to urban design. From these masterful syntheses, a new, timely way to design cities emerges." - *Frederick Steiner, Dean, School of Architecture, The University of Texas at Austin*

"Jonathan Barnett has devoted his professional career to the education, theory, practice and intimate understanding of urban design. With *City Design*, Barnett untangles the complexity of diverse urban

design approaches through a careful consideration of four basic design positions on the city; Modernist, Traditional, Green and Systems design. His text provides a much needed sense of perspective for the design of contemporary cities in an increasingly dynamic and globalized urban world." - *Alfonso Vegara, President of Fundación Metrópoli, Madrid, Spain*

"The strenght of *City Design* is Barnett's brilliance at documenting the lineage of urban design thought in an accessible and engaging manner." - *Sarah P. Church, University of British Columbia, Journal of Planning Education and Research*

About the Author

Jonathan Barnett is a professor and director of the Urban Design Program at the University of Pennsylvania, a former director of urban design for the New York City Planning Department, and an advisor on many projects in the United States, China, Korea, Cambodia, and Mexico. He has written extensively about city design theory and practice. Educated at Yale and the University of Cambridge, he is a Fellow of both the American Institute of Architects and the American Institute of Certified Planners.

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