



## The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream

By Christopher B. Leinberger

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**The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream** By Christopher B. Leinberger

Americans are voting with their feet to abandon strip malls and suburban sprawl, embracing instead a new type of community where they can live, work, shop, and play within easy walking distance. In *The Option of Urbanism* visionary developer and strategist Christopher B. Leinberger explains why government policies have tilted the playing field toward one form of development over the last sixty years: the drivable suburb. Rooted in the driving forces of the economy—car manufacturing and the oil industry—this type of growth has fostered the decline of community, contributed to urban decay, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and contributed to the rise in obesity and asthma.

Highlighting both the challenges and the opportunities for this type of development, *The Option of Urbanism* shows how the American Dream is shifting to include cities as well as suburbs and how the financial and real estate communities need to respond to build communities that are more environmentally, socially, and financially sustainable.

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### Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #978126 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Island Press
- Published on: 2009-07-06
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .70" w x 6.00" l, .75 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 232 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"In the latest of his long list of notable writings and accomplishments, author Christopher B. Leinberger introduces in *The Option of Urbanism* a new framework within which to tackle the question of sprawl and imagine the future. In [his book], Leinberger deftly shares his wealth of knowledge through the musings of a writer, the patience of an academic, and the technical ability of an active developer. The book is straightforward and manages to be an enjoyable reading experience for just about anyone interested in where the developing landscape goes from here." -- Howard Kozloff "Urban Land magazine" (01/11/2007)

Could it possibly be that [metropolitan] Washington, for years bashed by politicians, its [city] population shrinking and, at one point, almost bankrupt, has become a model of how the entire nation might smartly develop in the 21st century? I never thought I'd see the day. But Christopher Leinberger makes a startling case for it in his book. -- Neal Peirce "Washington Post Writers Group"

"Leinberger, a developer who teaches real estate at the University of Michigan, may be the boldest prophet of walkability anywhere. 'The United States,' he writes, 'is on the verge of a new phase in constructing its built environment.'" -- Alan Ehrenhalt "Governing magazine" (02/01/2008)

"A readable synthesis of history, planning, and real estate, the book is not yet another polemic about *How We Should Live*, but an informed and realistic argument about future growth and what choices we face along the way. Leinberger's book offers the novice a readable introduction to some of the debate surrounding the American city, and the veteran a lively respite from the house of mirrors. With well-selected references that provide a good jumping-off point for further reading, I wouldn't hesitate to recommend the book to my students or friends looking for a fresh take on the form and future of our cities." -- Rob Goodspeed "Goodspeed Update" (02/22/2008)

"The clarity of the descriptions and the grounding in economics and market are the best of our collective efforts. I particularly like the chapter on the costs of sprawl - a powerful summary that should be read by all new urbanists." -- Peter Calthorpe (06/03/2009)

"Could it possibly be that [metropolitan] Washington, for years bashed by politicians, its [city] population shrinking and, at one point, almost bankrupt, has become a model of how the entire nation might smartly develop in the 21st century? I never thought I'd see the day. But Christopher Leinberger. makes a startling case for it. in his book." -- Neal Peirce "Washington Post Writers Group"

"Developer and professor Christopher B. Leinberger...has written the book to give to colleagues, constituents, and public officials who don't quite get what's going on in American cities and suburbs. *The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream* is free of jargon and, more important, free of ideological resentments." -- Harold Henderson "Planning magazine" (02/01/2008)

#### About the Author

Christopher B. Leinberger is a developer, professor, consultant, and author whose work has focused on making progressive development profitable. He is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution and is director of the Graduate Real Estate Program at the University of Michigan. He is a founding partner of Arcadia Land Company, a progressive real estate development firm, and has written award-winning articles for publications such as *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

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#### **Tonya Sewell:**

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#### **Lamont Williams:**

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#### **Edwin Dulac:**

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