



Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time

By Jeff Speck



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"Timely and important, a delightful, insightful, irreverent work . . . Should be required reading." ?*The Christian Science Monitor*

A Best Book of the Year according to Planetizen and the American Society of Landscape Architects

Jeff Speck has dedicated his career to determining what makes cities thrive. And he has boiled it down to one key factor: walkability.

Making downtown into a walkable, viable community is the essential fix for the

typical American city; it is eminently achievable and its benefits are manifold.

Walk-

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happens?lays out a practical, necessary, and inspiring vision for how to make American

cities great again.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Speck, coauthor of *Suburban Nation* (2000), believes America has a problem—actually, lots of problems—that can be solved by improving walkability in our cities. Public health, sustainability, and even the lagging economy, he argues, can be boosted by making cities more friendly for pedestrians. Drawing on his background as a city planner and architectural designer, Speck lays out a 10-step plan for changing the way we build and think about our public spaces. The steps are wide-ranging, from planting more trees and narrowing roads to investing in well-planned public transit systems and designing visually interesting buildings. Speck is at times blunt and doesn't mince words about the roadblocks to walkability: "Traffic studies are bullshit." But he makes a clear and convincing case for the benefits of revitalizing our public spaces in favor of foot traffic. *Walkable City*, in addition to being full of information about city planning and progress, is a remarkably readable book and moves along quickly because of Speck's spirited writing and no-holds-barred attitude. An engaging book with a powerful message and achievable goals. --Sarah Hunter

Review

"A delightful, insightful, irreverent work." ?*The Christian Science Monitor*

"If Jane Jacobs invented a new urbanism, *Walkable City* is its perfect complement, a commonsense twenty-first-century user's manual." ?*Kurt Andersen, host of Studio 360 and author of True Believers*

"A recipe for vibrant street life." ?*Los Angeles Times*

"Refreshing, lively and engaging . . . *Walkable City* isn't a harangue, it's a fun, readable and persuasive call to arms." ?*Steven Litt, The Plain Dealer (Cleveland)*

"Everyone interested in improving the quality of city life should read this book and heed its lessons." ?*John Strawn, The Sunday Oregonian*

"Among the perennial flood of books on urban design in all its forms, this one stands out." ?*John King, San Francisco Chronicle*

"*Walkable City* is an energetic, feisty book, one that never contents itself with polite generalities. Sometimes breezy and anecdotal yet always logical and amply researched, this is one of the best books to appear this year. Speck deserves the widest possible readership." ?*Philip Langdon, Better! Cities & Towns*

"*Walkable City* . . . will change the way you see cities." ?*Kaid Benfield, The Atlantic Cities*

"Jeff Speck, AICP, is one of the few practitioners and writers in the field who can make a 312-page book on a basic planning concept seem too short . . . For getting planning ideas into the thinking and the daily life of U.S. cities, this is the book." ?*Planning magazine*

"Jeff Speck's brilliant and entertaining book reminds us that, in America, the exception could easily become the rule. Mayors, planners, and citizens need look no further for a powerful and achievable vision of how to make our ordinary cities great again." ?*Joseph P. Riley, mayor of Charleston, S.C.*

“Cities are the future of the human race, and Jeff Speck knows how to make them work. In *Walkable City*, he persuasively explains how to create rational urban spaces and improve quality of life by containing the number one vector of global environmental catastrophe: the automobile.” ?David Owen, staff writer at *The New Yorker* and author of *Green Metropolis*

“Companionable and disarmingly candid, Jeff Speck perches on your shoulder and gets you to see your community with fresh eyes. He gradually builds a compelling case for walkability as the essential distillation of a vast trove of knowledge about urbanism and placemaking. The case he makes has you both nodding at the intuitive and seemingly obvious wisdom presented, and shaking your head at why those basic principles of fixing our cities have eluded us for so long.” ?Harriet Tregoning, founder of the *National Smart Growth Network*

“Jeff Speck understands a key fact about great cities, which is that their streets matter more than their buildings. And he understands a key fact about great streets, which is that the people who walk along them matter more than the cars that drive through them. *Walkable City* is an eloquent ode to the livable city and to the values behind it.” ?Paul Goldberger, Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic and author of *Why Architecture Matters*

“With *Walkable City*, Jeff Speck demonstrates why he is among the most relevant and engaging writers on urban design today.” ?Ron Bogle, president and CEO of the *American Architectural Foundation*

“When I speak around the country, people ask me what is the first thing they should do to start their community on the path of smart growth. I will now say: Read Jeff Speck's *Walkable City*.” ?Parris Glendening, governor of Maryland (1995–2003) and president of *Smart Growth America's Leadership Institute*

“Truly a book that is so very needed, *Walkable City* moves theory into action. We now know we need to build walkable urban places for all sorts of economic, social, and environmental reasons. Jeff Speck shows how to do it in the same clear style we came to love in the classic *Suburban Nation*.” ?Christopher B. Leinberger, visiting fellow at the *Brookings Institution* and author of *The Option of Urbanism*

About the Author

Jeff Speck, coauthor of the landmark bestseller *Suburban Nation*, is a city planner who advocates for smart growth and sustainable design. As the former director of design at the National Endowment for the Arts, he oversaw the Mayors' Institute on City Design, where he worked with dozens of American mayors on their most pressing city planning challenges. He leads a design practice based in Washington, D.C.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Andrew Meadows:

The ability that you get from *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time* will be the more deep you looking the information that hide inside the words the more you get interested in reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to recognise but *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time* giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in certain way that can be understood by means of anyone who read this because the author of this reserve is well-known enough. This specific book also makes your personal vocabulary increase well. That makes it easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you

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