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The Human City: Urbanism For The Rest Of Us

"No one knows more about cities than Joel Kotkin, and has more to teach us about them." —*U.S. News & World Report*

The

Human

City

Urbanism for the Rest of Us

Joel Kotkin

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Synopsis

"The Human City presents the most cogent, evidence-based and clear-headed exposition of the pro-suburban argument. . . . enriching our understanding of what cities are about and what they can and must become." • #151;Wall Street Journal

Around the globe, most new urban development has adhered to similar tenets: tall structures, small units, and high density. In *The Human City*, Joel Kotkin • #151;called "America's uber-geographer" • by David Brooks of the New York Times • #151;questions these nearly ubiquitous practices, suggesting that they do not consider the needs and desires of the vast majority of people. Built environments, Kotkin argues, must reflect the preferences of most people "especially those of families" even if that means lower-density development. *The Human City* ponders the purpose of the city and investigates the factors that drive most urban development today. Armed with his own astute research, a deep-seated knowledge of urban history, and a sound grasp of economic, political, and social trends, Kotkin pokes holes in what he calls the "retro-urbanist" ideology and offers a refreshing case for dispersion centered on human values. This book is not anti-urban, but it does advocate a greater range of options for people to live the way they want at all stages of their lives.

Book Information

File Size: 1603 KB

Print Length: 304 pages

Publisher: Agate B2 (April 12, 2016)

Publication Date: April 12, 2016

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01DV1YATQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Not Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #286,423 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #20

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Economics > Urban & Regional #46

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Customer Reviews

I greatly appreciate Joel Kotkin book. I am citizen who volunteers to serve on the El Paso County Planning Commission. The City of Colorado Springs constitutes some 70% of the urbanized population in the County. I have been intuitively ambivalent about efforts to increase urban population densities. Many professional planners treat increased urban density as if it is a modern "Holy Grail". My wife and I live in a suburban setting, in one of 126 detached townhomes inside a gated community. I prefer not to maintain a yard and we enjoy the freedom to travel. Transportation is good and I can travel to the City's relatively small core in 15 to 20 minutes. All 4 of our adult children all live in a suburban setting with good sized yards and 2-car garages. It is a great place to raise children. Some people want to live in a higher density apartment or townhome. They like this life style. Joel used a heavily data-driven narrative to both validate my residential living choice and to help me to understand why others will choose something different. Joel insists that housing must work for the resident, not some planner or governmental official. Joel also exposes much commonly accepted thinking as being unsupported by the data. This a good read for anyone interested in understanding the urban, suburban, and exurban dynamics. I recommend it very highly!

Interesting examination of how and why people live in groups. Reading it reward your time and perhaps change your view of cities, why they exist, and where we're going.

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