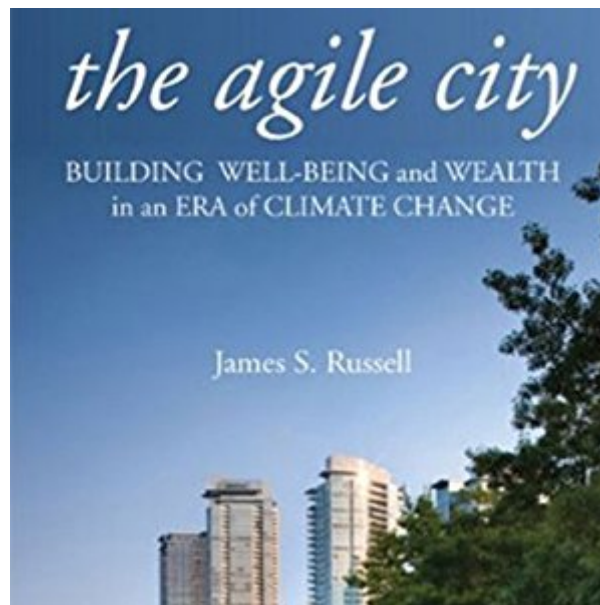




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The Agile City: Building Well-being And Wealth In An Era Of Climate Change



Synopsis

In a very short time America has realized that global warming poses real challenges to the nation's future. The Agile City engages the fundamental question: what to do about it? Journalist and urban analyst James S. Russell argues that we'll more quickly slow global warming - and blunt its effects - by retrofitting cities, suburbs, and towns. The Agile City shows that change undertaken at the building and community level can reach carbon-reduction goals rapidly. Adapting buildings (39 percent of greenhouse-gas emission) and communities (slashing the 33 percent of transportation related emissions) offers numerous other benefits that tax gimmicks and massive alternative-energy investments can't match. Rapidly improving building techniques can readily cut carbon emissions by half, and some can get to zero. These cuts can be affordably achieved in the windshield-shattering heat of the desert and the bone-chilling cold of the north. Intelligently designing our towns could reduce marathon commutes and child chauffeuring to a few miles or eliminate it entirely. Agility, Russell argues, also means learning to adapt to the effects of climate change, which means redesigning the obsolete ways real-estate is financed; housing subsidies are distributed; transportation is provided; and water is obtained, distributed and disposed of. These engines of growth have become increasingly more dysfunctional both economically and environmentally. The Agile City highlights tactics that create multiplier effects, which means that ecologically driven change can shore-up economic opportunity, can make more productive workplaces, and can help revive neglected communities. Being able to look at multiple effects and multiple benefits of political choices and private investments is essential to assuring wealth and well-being in the future. Green, Russell writes, grows the future.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

James Russell's book is a powerful analysis of the development forces and environmental impacts that today affect and control the growth of cities. It provides a structured, well-organized description of the disparate urban growth factors that often confound urbanists and frustrate those trying to rationalize a seemingly chaotic process. The process is described well and integrated into a larger, comprehensible vision of how cities grow and change and how new influences -- technology, culture and environment -- will alter their growth habits. He analyzes the interplay of the many influences on urban development and portrays a viable, if difficult to achieve, future city that is livable, adaptable, and inclusive, embracing the modern values that will determine how well the future city will succeed. It's a great overview of the field and describes well the roles played by many leading thinkers working in the world of urban development and environmental design.

The Agile City offers an optimistic--and achievable--approach to addressing climate change. As it becomes clear that tackling the environmental crisis building-by-building is too-little-too-late, Russell demonstrates how cities are the key. He brings together timely and well-researched examples from around the world in an engaging and readable book. You will come away energized and ready to make a difference.

Agile City is an informative and well-written book that weaves together today's key issues including urban planning, architecture, sustainability -- but this is not just another green design book. It goes beyond to delve into the underlying political and economic forces at work, specifically in the US, and outlines areas where change is required. A must read for those engaged professionally with the built environment -- and recommended for others interested in understanding these complex problems and some palatable solutions.

The Agile City offers a broad range of valuable information about recent developments in the built environment worldwide. These are constructive solutions that demonstrate there is no longer a question of choosing jobs over nature. Only a win - win (or well-being and Wealth) attitude will be successful. Essential reading for professionals in the design fields, the book is also enlightening for the intelligent citizen wondering how to face the future.

In all the recent talk about alternative energy as a solution to climate change, in "The Agile City", James Russell presents a compelling case for the role of cities and conservation. A great read with real-world examples of what you can do in your own city.

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