



How to Build a Village, 1st Edition

Claude Lewenz

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This first edition has been superseded by the 2nd edition... please see [amazon.com/dp/0958286876](https://www.amazon.com/dp/0958286876)

SUBURBS WERE INVENTED TO SELL CARS. Toward the end of World War II, American business and government leaders saw a second Great Depression looming if government spending ended and millions of soldiers returned home. They decided to turn the war-winning industries of oil, jeeps and tanks into the post-war civilian industries of oil, cars and bulldozers - to go from fighting a war to building the new American suburbs. To make the shift they legislated a radical change in how humans live - spreading out human activities so the mundane chores of daily life required a car.

The economic plan worked and for over half a century the US economy boomed. "What's good for General Motors is good for America". Without understanding why, other countries adopted the American way - even countries that did not make cars or pump oil. While the plan was good for America's post-war economy, suburbs proved to be an immeasurably bad use of resources - both natural and in how people live.

VILLAGES ARE DESIGNED FOR QUALITY OF LIFE

What happens if we design for quality of life rather than to sell cars? What would the zoning look like? How would it work? In this 256 page book with over 400 color photographs, this question is examined in detail. The answer is a "Village" defined as a 5,000 to 10,000 population, self-contained, high-density community built on 100-400 acres around multiple plazas with cafes, shops, workplaces and artist guilds and no cars within - all is within a 10-minute walk with a motorpool for the cars, outside the Village gates. Local governments can think of the Village as an environmentally, socially, culturally and economically sustainable, self-contained, billion-dollar, greenfield, mainstream investment that brings in over 2,000 new, quality jobs worth over \$100 million a year. Future residents of the Village can think of it as a wonderful, thriving and fulfilling place to live.

Each part of a Village makes another part work. The keystone is its own local economy. With a local economy, the Village is micro-zoned - everything people need is within walking distance... homes, work, shops, cafés, schools and recreation. This removes need for cars, which lowers pollution and cost of living. No cars results in smaller roads, more human-scaled, lower-cost and better land-use. Elders need not move to retirement homes when they no longer drive. Children can play in the streets and plazas where working adults keep an eye on them. Small streets require fireproof buildings (no large fire trucks), thus the book proposes a design that is also rot-free and super-insulated. Plazas provide the perfect setting to Slow Food - enriching social interaction. Add the cultural enrichment of arts guildhalls and the Village becomes more interesting. Another social element include parallel market affordable housing, homes for service workers, teachers, youth, elders, artists - the glue that holds a community together.

This book is necessary to challenge a mindset. The ideas are simple, conservative, (meaning proven, time-tested, not risky) and should be obvious. However, experts spent 50 years inventing a complex, radical, and problem-ridden way for people to live now so embedded in mainstream thinking that it takes a book, with systematic details, to show a way out. Once the book resets that mindset, villageforum.com provides the forum to build the Villages. The book will be judged not on numbers of copies sold but Villages built.

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