



# 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-*

*able City?*bursting with sharp observations and key insights into how urban change

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:

##### **Richard Reardon:**

Nowadays reading books be a little more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading practice give you lot of advantages. Associate programs you got of course the knowledge the actual information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of guide you read, if you want get more knowledge just go with education books but if you want really feel happy read one along with theme for entertaining for example comic or novel. The actual *Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time* is kind of publication which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

**Tom Seaman:**

This Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time are generally reliable for you who want to certainly be a successful person, why. The reason why of this Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time can be one of many great books you must have is actually giving you more than just simple reading through food but feed you with information that maybe will shock your previous knowledge. This book is definitely handy, you can bring it almost everywhere and whenever your conditions both in e-book and printed ones. Beside that this Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time giving you an enormous of experience for instance rich vocabulary, giving you demo of critical thinking that we realize it useful in your day pastime. So , let's have it and revel in reading.

**Mamie Perkins:**

This Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time is completely new way for you who has interest to look for some information mainly because it relief your hunger of knowledge. Getting deeper you on it getting knowledge more you know or else you who still having tiny amount of digest in reading this Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time can be the light food for you because the information inside this particular book is easy to get simply by anyone. These books develop itself in the form which can be reachable by anyone, yep I mean in the e-book contact form. People who think that in book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this e-book is the answer. So there isn't any in reading a guide especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for you. So , don't miss this! Just read this e-book type for your better life as well as knowledge.

**Vikki Maynard:**

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