



FINDING YOUR SENSE OF PLACE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020

Event Agenda

During the event, test your knowledge with our "[Utah Sense of Place Game](#)" and win some USU swag!

11:30 a.m.	Welcome	Lisa Berreau USU Vice President for Research
11:32 a.m.	Opening Remarks	Noelle Cockett USU President
11:37 a.m.	Remarks	Beth Holbrook UTA Board of Trustees
11:42 a.m.	"Finding Our Sense of Place"	David Anderson Jake Powell USU Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning
12:05 p.m.	Open Discussion and Live Q&A	
1:30 p.m.	Adjourn	

After a brief intermission at the conclusion of the event, David Anderson and Jake Powell will be available for brief one-on-one discussions regarding specific or unique questions about your community.

STEP #1

IDENTIFY**Questions About Your Community**

- Think about what made your community special.
- Think about the places you went to.
- Think about the places that you celebrated being a community together.
- Where did the parade happen on the Fourth of July?
- Where was the central hub where people got together to share ideas, to argue, to reconcile differences?
- Where are the places people went to have fun?
- Where were places where people took pictures in your community?
- Where did you go for your family pictures?
- Where did you take people when they came to visit your community?
- Or, when you say you're from a place, what do you think people envision about that community?
- What are people working to protect?
- What are things that you are heartbroken that have been lost?

STEP #1

IDENTIFY

What Do Others Say?

Responses from today's attendees on their communities' unique characteristics

NATURAL LANDSCAPES

- Proximity to mountains/nature
- Mountain landscape
- Trails, recreation, open space
- Lakes/rivers/creeks/canals
- Wildlife
- Red Rock
- Snow

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Downtown
- University
- Trees
- Architecture
- Specific landmark
- Parks
- Walkability
- Golf course
- Public spaces
- Unique neighborhoods
- Walkability

RURAL AGRICULTURE

- Rural
- Small
- Farmland
- Large lots

GROWTH

- Urban
- Fast growing
- Center of commerce
- Affordable

PEOPLE/CULTURE

- Pioneer heritage/history
- Diversity
- People
- Local Culture
- Togetherness
- Community events
- Stable/safe
- Neighborliness

STEP #1

IDENTIFY**What Do Others Say?**

Responses from today's attendees
on memorable communities in the West

Albuquerque (Old Town), NM

Avon/Paradise, UT

Boise, ID

Boulder, CO

Boulder, UT

Bozeman, MT

Breckenridge, CO

Brigham City, UT

Cedar City, UT

Cripple Creek, CO

Daybreak (Community), UT

Denver, CO

Escalante, UT

Estes Park, CO

Flagstaff, AZ

Fort Collins, CO

Grand Junction, CO

Helper, UT

Hood River, OR

Island Park, ID

Jackson WY

Ketchum, ID

Las Vegas, NV

Lava Hot Springs, ID

Logan, UT

Manti, UT

Mesa, AZ

Midway, UT

Millcreek, UT

Moab, UT

Oakley, UT

Ogden, UT

Ouray, CO

Missoula, MT

Park City, UT

Provo, UT

Rexburg, ID

Rossland, BC

Salt Lake City, UT

Sedona, AZ

Snowmass Village, CO

Spring City, UT

Springdale, UT

St. George, UT

Stanley, ID

Steamboat Springs, CO

Taos, NM

Vail, CO

Vernal, UT

STEP #1

IDENTIFY

Where to get help?

Once you have spent time considering your expert knowledge of your community, consider consulting with a planning expert to help provide an external perspective and also guide your thoughts into concrete actions.

FIND A COMMUNITY DESIGNER

[American Society of Landscape Architects](#) has a directory of local landscape architects and designers, with filterable firm specialties.

[Utah State University Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning](#) selects one community each year to engage in an intensive charrette process to generate new ideas and a future vision for planning. Additionally, the department also facilitates a community design team.

STEP #2

DEFEND

Create internal buy in.

Talk about it in community meetings. Keep it on the agenda.

Communicate.

Share your community's values and visions on your website, in your newsletters, throughout your social media.

Create policy.

Put your vision to paper and create regulations that help develop your sense of place.

Basic training available from the [Utah League of Cities and Towns](#).

Additional resources on create policies for urban and rural transportation, arts & culture, real estate development and more is provided by [Smart Growth America](#).

Find resources on saving your community's historic resources at the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#).

STEP #3

ENHANCE

Create a plan.

Articulate a long-term vision and path for future growth and development.

General principles and guidelines for gateway communities are being developed by the [Gateway and Natural Amenity Region \(GNAR\)](#) initiative.

Ideas for suburban communities can be found at [Build a Better Burb](#), by the Congress for New Urbanism

Invest.

Prioritize appropriate resources for maintaining a sense of place.

Investigate the grant program sponsored by the [Utah League of Cities and Towns](#).

Look at other successes.

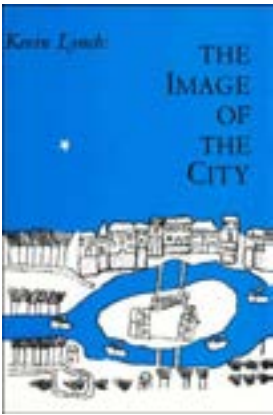
Hear about [Pocatello, Idaho's transformation](#) on *Instead*, a podcast by USU's Office of Research.

STEP #3

ENHANCE

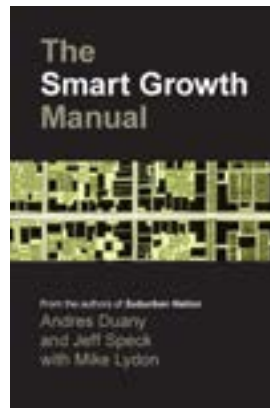
Keep reading.

Here's a reading list of Dave and Jake's favorite books aimed at a layperson audience.



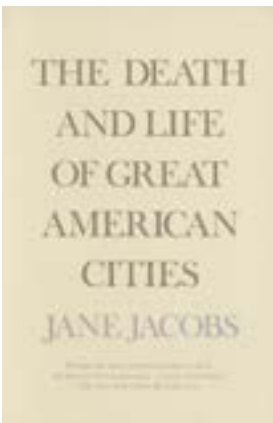
THE IMAGE OF THE CITY

Kevin Lynch



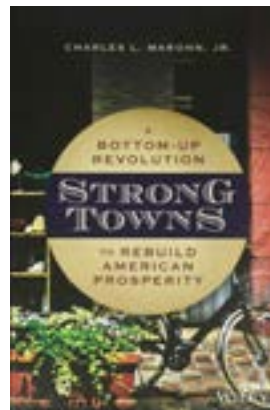
THE SMART GROWTH MANUAL

Andres Duany



THE DEATH AND LIFE OF GREAT AMERICAN CITIES

Jane Jacobs



STRONG TOWNS: A BOTTOM-UP REVOLUTION TO REBUILD AMERICAN PROSPERITY

Charles L. Marohn Jr.

Also...

A great source for local news on community planning: [American Planning Association Utah](#)

A delightful set of free community planning coloring books: [American Society of Landscape Architects](#)

Presentation Highlights

Dave Anderson (professional practice associate professor) and

Jake Powell (extension specialist)

USU Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning

View the full presentation on [YouTube](#).

Q: WHAT MAKES A PLACE SPECIAL?

A: AUTHENTICITY.

- What makes a place special really comes from its roots.
- Trying to adopt someone else's roots and history will fundamentally change the community, perhaps not for the best.

Q: WHAT IS SENSE OF PLACE?

A: AN AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATION THAT MELDS BOTH HISTORY AND THE PRESENT.

- It's an implicit way to assess people's values.
- Sense of place is an innate response to what a community cares about, because what they built took a lot of resources, time, energy, and sacrifice.

Q: WHY IS IT HARD TO CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE?

A: WE'RE MOVING AWAY FROM OUR HISTORY IN THE INTEREST OF HOMOGENEITY.

- Original Mormon communities created the underlying fabric of a community.
- That fabric has become frayed as we patched in the same looking fabric from other communities and homogenous development.
- Communities are starting to look like the same fabric over and over again.

Q: WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF LOSING OUR SENSE OF PLACE?

A: IF THEY ARE CONTINUALLY ERODED AWAY, WE TAKE LESS CARE OF THESE PLACES.

- They degrade, they go downhill, and then people pick up and move to another place and leave behind a bad situation.
- Sense of place creates a sense of ownership and pride in an area.

- When we care about the communities we come from and live in, we take better care of them.
- Those who have the resources can be mobile and move to communities with strong sense of place.
- That can perpetuate a really dangerous cycle of leaving behind those who are most vulnerable in communities that facilitate the least quality of life.

Q: HOW DO WE CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE?

A: #1 USU STUDENT CHARRETTES

- USU helps students go into communities and work with them.
- When we try to help the community, we're give it fresh eyes and, with our students, we'll look and identify attributes of a particular community and the features that help define it.
- We ask how we can reinforce them so that they are strengthened, supported, and connected?
- The role of landscape architects, designers and planners: helping a community find their vision, find their sense of place, and try to retain that sense of place or build that sense of place.

Q: HOW DO WE CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE?

A: IDENTIFY, DEFEND, STRENGTHEN

- One of the things that communities need to do, though, first is identify those things in their community that are special.
 - Main Street buildings.
 - Stream
 - Existing park.
 - Grove of trees.
 - Etc.
- Then we need to figure out how to defend and take care of those things.
- Getting it written down and adopted as law or policy.
- Create different criteria and then enhancing the things that are that need to be strengthened.
- Every development decision either enhances its unique sense of place or reduces it.

Q: WHAT'S AN EXAMPLE OF FINDING A SENSE OF PLACE?

A: KANAB

Kanab's Challenge

- In the spring of 2020, USU worked with the community of Kanab, a defining landscape of the West.
- One reason it's a draw today is a gateway community authenticity.

- We heard from the community members that it was losing some of that identity, becoming victim to "placelessness."
- That fabric that makes Kanab special, but it's under threat and beginning to fray one commercial development at a time, one new hotel, one big box store at a time.

Addressing Challenges with USU Charrette

- Why a charrette?
 - Give Utah students that opportunity to work with communities.
 - Give the community resources and tools.
 - Help communities create foundation material to seek grant funding or to build community support for a particular idea.
 - Help to recognize important assets in the community, help defend them, enhance them, and strengthen them in the future.
- We had a long-established relationship with many of the community leaders and members, so we were able to have some really hard conversations.
- Kanab residents know what makes their communities special, but our profession and our department can bring an outside perspective of trained faculty, and also of young adults that shape a community's future.

Issues we worked on in Kanab

- Gateways
 - How do people enter your community?
 - How do they know that they've transitioned from somewhere else into your community?
- Natural systems
 - Things that had been forgotten or underappreciated.
 - A creek that runs right through town.
- Downtown
 - What makes downtown special?
 - What are the challenges?
 - Major state highway bisecting downtown.
- How to deal with this?
 - Investigate different housing types,
 - Allow retirees, young professionals to move back to this community that want to invest in this community?
 - Where do they live?
 - How do we make it affordable?
 - And where do those houses go so that the sense of this place called Kanab can remain this quintessential Western rural town?

Q: WHAT ARE SENSE-OF-PLACE CHALLENGES ALONG THE WASATCH FRONT?**A: THE GROWTH OF SUBURBAN “BEDROOM” COMMUNITIES.**

- Some cities are known as “bedroom” communities, not a place to live and work.
- Communities have grown and blended together.
- Many of them are newer communities.
- Some communities have developed few intents or long-term objectives.

Q: HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?**A: ECONOMIC FORCES ENCOURAGED HOMOGENEITY, BUT THOSE SAME FORCES REQUIRE UNIQUENESS AGAIN.**

- Communities started with a sense of place.
- Many communities' goal was to look like every other community.
- Goals are changing to be unique now.
- Facing some significant challenges in going back and trying to create a sense of place.

Q: WHAT CAN COMMUNITIES DO?**A: CONTINUE ASKING QUESTIONS AND HAVING DISCUSSIONS.**

- Are there buildings that can be saved?
- Can they be repurposed?
- Do we need to remove them?
- Can we reduce the size of some large blocks?
- Can we create blocks that are more walkable?
- Can we encourage more street trees?

**“GREAT PLACES HAVE TWO THINGS IN COMMON:
THEY HAVE ONE FOOT IN MEMORY AND ONE FOOT IN PROPHECY.”**