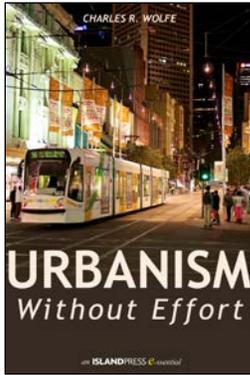




## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT  
EMAIL  
WEBSITE

Jaime Jennings, 202-232-7933x44  
[jjennings@islandpress.org](mailto:jjennings@islandpress.org)  
[www.islandpress.org/essentials](http://www.islandpress.org/essentials)



### PRESS RELEASE

## URBANISM WITHOUT EFFORT

An Island Press E-ssential  
By Charles R. Wolfe

*Advance praise for **Urbanism Without Effort**:*

*"A plea for a renewed commitment to authentic urbanism and an invitation to learn from history as our cities enter a future of unprecedented change."*

*—Alex Steffen, author of Carbon Zero: Imagining Cities that Can Save the Planet*

*"This is a must read for those who want to understand in words and pictures what stands behind great cities. We're proud to see a Seattle native son helping to show the way."*

*—Mike McGinn, Mayor of Seattle, founding Executive Director, Seattle Great City Initiative*

*"One of Chuck Wolfe's great gifts is an extraordinary photographer's eye for capturing visual images of everyday, but evocative, city life. Another is an uncommonly strong intellectual grounding in urban planning theory. In **Urbanism Without Effort**, he combines the two in unique fashion to show us how unplanned places can often teach us more about great placemaking than planned ones."*

*—Kaid Benfield, Director, Sustainable Communities for the Natural Resources Defense Council*

*"Chuck's work is what happens when art meets science in placemaking....Lucky for us, Chuck is always paying attention and this book is the proof."*

*—Dr. Katherine Loflin, Loflin Consulting Solutions*

*Washington, DC (May 2013)* — In recent years, urban planners and advocates have made exciting progress in revitalizing cities, making them more green, walkable, and connected. But has the attempt to engineer livable, connected urban places stifled the best, natural approaches to urbanism and forgotten the critical importance of understanding basic relationships between people and place?

In ***Urbanism Without Effort***, a new electronic-only book from the Island Press E-ssentials program, Charles Wolfe, a respected voice on urbanism, brings a unique combination of skills as a writer, photographer and land use attorney to present a thought-provoking, practical, and well-illustrated narrative aimed squarely at rapidly evolving cities today. He says that with all of today's buzzwords—e.g., pop-up, insurgent, green, transit-oriented, new—we lose sight of the fact that the most enduring, vibrant aspects of city life aren't

engineered by professionals. They are the natural result of people coming together in an urban environment. He contends that city life shouldn't feel like work; it should be effortless. It shouldn't feel designed; it should be spontaneous.

Wolfe argues that before we can create vibrant, sustainable urban areas, we need to understand what happens naturally when people congregate in cities. He offers numerous personal photographs and vignettes carefully selected from lessons learned during a life spent studying how city dwellers interact naturally with each other and the urban environment.

Wolfe shares observations from throughout the history of the city as well as current developments in cities around the world. This collection of sights, sounds, and stories serves as his own set of touchstone examples of successful urban land use, and also teaches readers the principles of curating an urban diary for their own inspiration. He knows that while good urban places can never be created by merely copying what works elsewhere, imported principles can be carefully adapted to fit a new context with impressive results.

***Urbanism Without Effort*** is a strikingly illustrated, lively and uncomplicated read that serves as a poignant reminder of the innovative history and promising future of human interaction with the urban form.

**Charles R. (Chuck) Wolfe**, M.R.P., J.D. provides a unique perspective about cities as both a long time writer about urbanism worldwide and as an attorney in Seattle, where he focuses on land use and environmental law. In particular, his work involves the use of sustainable development techniques and innovative land use regulatory tools on behalf of both the private and public sectors. He frequently counsels clients on ways to achieve the successful redevelopment of infill properties under federal, state, and local regulatory regimes. He is also an Affiliate Associate Professor in the College of Built Environments at the University of Washington, where he teaches land use law at the graduate level. He serves on the Board of Directors of Futurewise and Great City, the Management Committee of the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Northwest District Council, and has served as Chair of both the American Planning Association's Planning and Law Division and the Washington State Bar Association's Environmental and Land Use Law Section. Chuck is an avid traveler, photographer and writer, and contributes regularly on urban development topics for several publications including *The Atlantic Cities*, *The Atlantic*, *The Huffington Post*, *Grist*, [seattlepi.com](http://seattlepi.com), and [Crosscut.com](http://Crosscut.com). He blogs at [myurbanist.com](http://myurbanist.com).

***Urbanism Without Effort***

**By Charles R. Wolfe**

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Since 1984, Island Press has been working with innovative thinkers to stimulate, shape, and communicate essential ideas. As a nonprofit organization committed to advancing sustainability, we publish widely in the fields of ecosystem conservation and management, urban design and community development, energy, economics, environmental policy, and health. The Island Press E-ssentials Program is a series of electronic-only works that complement our book program. These timely examinations of important issues are intended to be readable in a couple of hours yet illuminate genuine complexity, and inspire readers to take action to foster a healthy planet.

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