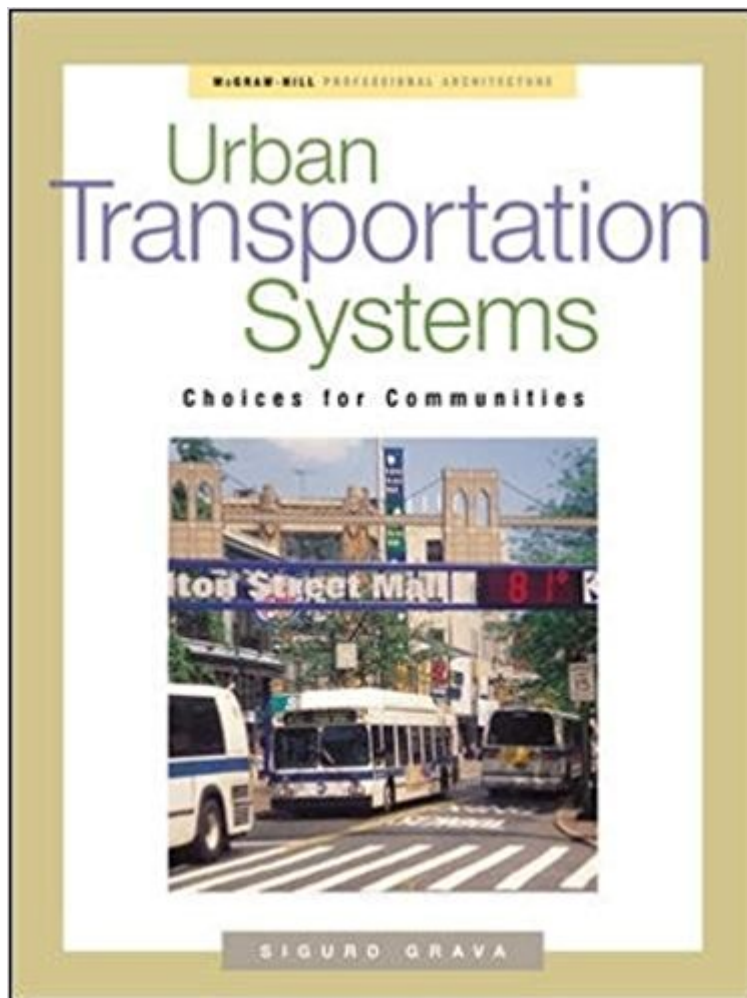




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Urban Transportation Systems



Synopsis

Urban Transportation Systems is a complete guide to the types of transportation available to communities together with the technical tools needed to evaluate each for given circumstances.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Excerpts from article by I-Shian Suen, Volume 69, #3 We all depend on various means of transportation for mobility in our daily lives: to travel to and from work, school, shopping centers, restaurants, financial institutions, medical facilities, cultural and sporting events, and the homes of family and friends, among many possibilities. Transportation has evolved into many forms in response to the needs and wants of residents, particularly in concentrated urban areas. In "Urban Transportation Systems: Choices for Communities," Grava provides a comprehensive view of a wide range of transportation options available to urban residents. His intent is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each transportation mode to help stakeholders make informed selections appropriate for their communities. Grava begins with an overview chapter presenting common criteria for selecting urban transportation modes. This is followed by 16 chapters devoted to the various modes, including walking, bicycles, motorcycles and scooters automobiles, paratransit, taxis, buses, bus rapid transit, trolleybuses, streetcars and light rail transit, monorails, heavy rail transit, commuter rail, automated guideway transit, waterborne modes, and special modes. After these chapters, Grava provides an integrating chapter that focuses on intermodal

transfer options. The concluding chapter reminds us of the challenges ahead and offers constructive suggestions for better transportation systems and services. The strength of the book is its comprehensive coverage of urban transportation modes. Grava gives each mode a logical and systematic treatment, based on over four decades of academic and consulting experience. Although this book has a U.S. focus, Grava's involvement in many transportation-related projects overseas enriches the discussion. Throughout the book, readers are rewarded with various urban transportation approaches or choices (many of them illustrated with photos) from all over the world. The chapters on modes generally follow the same format. They include: background information about the mode; history of the mode's evolution in relation to technological advancements and services demands; examples of operation of the mode in different localities; societal attitudes and perceptions toward the mode; evaluation of the suitable conditions and settings for the mode to be successful; review of mode-specific considerations, such as components; scheduling, capacity, costs, and land development effects; and possible programs to carry out the transportation mode. Each of these chapters ends with a summary / conclusion and an annotated bibliography. ... While Grava has done a remarkable job in presenting an extensive discussion of urban transportation ideas, the book could enhance its value by amplifying some of the topics. First, the interdependency and interplay between transportation and land use could use even more emphasis. Grava recognizes that "transportation systems and land use are two sides of the same coin"(p. 11) ... Nevertheless, "Urban Transportation Systems: Choices for Communities" is an excellent introductory book for policymakers, planners, transportation engineers and others interested in understanding the range of transportation modes. Given the intended purpose of this book, Grava has succeeded. It is not a complete package with conclusive solutions to urban transportation problems, but rather a resource that could provide a sound basis for identifying and selecting suitable transportation modes. You can get there from here. ... "Urban Transportation Systems: Choices for Communities" (2003; McGraw-Hill; 840 pages; \$99.95) offers a thorough and balanced look at the pros and cons of 16 different modes of moving people around in cities, from walking to aerial tramways.. . Author Sigurd Grava, FAICP, who teaches planning at Columbia University and is vice-president and technical director of planning at Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas, takes an optimistic long view: "There were periods in urban history when only a single transportation mode was reasonably available--horses, steam locomotives, or streetcars--and, thus, evaluation and selection were not much of an issue." Today, in contrast, there are many options, and we have the opportunity--and difficulty--of choosing appropriate modes from an unprecedented number of possibilities.. . The book is arranged by mode. Separate chapters deal with walking, bicycles,

motorcycles and scooters, automobiles (the longest chapter with more than 100 pages), paratransit, taxis, buses, bus rapid transit, trolleybuses, streetcars and light rail, monorails, heavy rail, commuter rail, automated guideway transit, waterborne modes, special modes, and intermodal terminals. "The fundamental premise of this review," writes Grava, "is that all modes are good, but only in their proper place.." . The author makes no attempt to discuss the "urban transportation problem" or comprehensive planning in general, but he does laydown some general criteria. Each mode gets a thorough listing of its pros ("reasons to support") and cons ("reasons to exercise caution") and its cost.. . The treatment is semi-technical, more detailed than is likely to appeal to the general public but not at the level of mechanical or traffic engineering. The author negotiates the many controversial areas of this subject with aplomb, including whether bicycle lanes are a good idea and what costs auto users do and do not pay.. . "Gasoline taxes and user charges cover less than two-thirds of all the tangible costs," he writes, "if, besides the construction and maintenance of roadways, highway patrols, traffic management, emergency response, and police investigations are also included," and even less if parking, accident costs, and pollution are added.. . On the other hand, "if the overwhelming part of the society is the beneficiary of this assistance, then they are simply shifting their own resources from one budget class to another, and they have the right to do that. And, if a rigorous cost-benefit analysis were to be demanded, the American public would easily see sufficient benefits in this situation to justify the costs.." . The bulk of the book is devoted to details of practice rather than controversy. Two useful appendices define rail terms and suggest the best places to examine particular modes or approaches in operation.

COMPREHENSIVE, EXPERT TREATMENT OF EVERY MODE OF URBAN TRANSPORTATION

INCLUDING THE AUTOMOBILE Transportation modes are an essential and controversial aspect of every urban and suburban development. They directly affect the sustainability, density, environmental soundness and perhaps ultimate success of any community. Urban Transportation Systems offers an in-depth, comprehensive, balanced discussion of all possible options with equal attention paid to the automobile -- and explains how to analyze alternatives and select the optimal system for a given community. This well-illustrated, problem-solving resource offers more than data -- it provides viable transportation solutions based on real-world elements such as consumer travel behavior and preferences and tackles complex, timely issues such as sprawl, traffic flow, and accessibility. Written by an international leader in the field of urban transportation, Urban Transportation Systems includes useful capacity, cost, and land-development considerations, as well as technical norms and specifications. With its

detailed coverage of every major transportation modality, including walking, bicycles, motorcycles, autos, street cars, trolleys, taxis, monorails, subways, waterborne methods, and much more, this extraordinary work will be worth its weight in gold to planners, urban designers, and engineers.

Good reference; a place to start.

Only as guidelines because today transportation changes too fast. Extremely well clarified and trim apart all the variables involved in transportation.

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