



Sustainable Communities: A Framework for Planning: Case Study of an Australian Outer Sydney Growth Area

Raymond Charles Rauscher, Salim Momtaz

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This book is in part a response to the attempts of governments to address increasing concerns over such environmental issues as the impact of climate change; carbon emissions; pressures from overpopulation of cities; coal seam gas extraction and depleting natural resources. The authors have developed a Sustainable Communities Framework (SCF) which incorporates social-cultural, environmental and economic sustainability principles in the process of urban planning. The authors propose a five-step SCF built on an application of sustainability tables. The book examines a wide range of urban planning practices utilizing sustainability criteria, outlining both qualitative and quantitative tools. Separate chapters discuss application of the SCF to both the natural environment and the built environment. This framework is applied to a case study of the outer Sydney growth area of Wyong Shire, Central Coast, NSW, Australia. Addressing the question of how best to measure the environment, the authors present a table for selecting indicators of sustainability, and outline sustainability scorecards which use color-coded ratings of green, red and amber to measure indicators of sustainability. The authors show how aggregating these ratings allows the framework to be scaled up for application to larger areas. Finally, the authors show how scorecards can be incorporated in sustainability reports, with actions and monitoring components. The authors also examine urban planning education including land use planning, natural resource planning and sustainable urban planning, focusing on the extent to which schools incorporate principles of sustainability. The authors offer their critique on the movement of planning practices towards a more coordinated and holistic framework, in incorporating sustainability principles. Sustainable Communities: A Framework for Planning concludes by drawing a future scenario on the application of the SCF to incorporate principles of sustainability into urban planning. The authors propose future options for SCF applications, including adopting a systems program; environmental performance monitoring and showing how the framework will accommodate the social-cultural and economic components of sustainability, in addition to the environmental ones as examined in the case study.

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