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American Hometown Renewal: Policy Tools and Techniques for Small Town Officials

Gary A. Mattson

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Before the interstates, Main Street America was the small town's commercial spine and served as the linchpin for community social solidarity. Yet, during the past three decades, a series of economic downturns has left many of the great small cities barely viable. *American Hometown Renewal* is the first book to combine administrative, budgetary, and economic analysis to examine the economic and fiscal plight currently facing America's small towns. Featuring a blend of theory, applications, and case studies, it provides a comprehensive, single-source textbook covering the key issues facing small town officials in today's uncertain economy.

Written by a former public manager, university professor, and consultant to numerous small towns in the Heartland, this book demonstrates the ways in which contemporary small towns throughout the nation are facing economic challenges brought about by the financial shocks that began in 2008. Each chapter explores a theme related to small town revival and provides a related tool or technique to enable small town officials to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. Encouraging local small town officials to look at the economic orbit of communities in a similar manner as a town's budget or a family's personal wealth, examining its specific competitive advantages in terms of relative assets to those of competing communities, this book provides the reader with step-by-step instructions on how to conduct an asset inventory and apply key asset tools to devise a strategy for overcoming the challenges and constraints imposed upon spatially-fixed communities. *American Hometown Renewal* is an essential primer for students studying city management, economic community development, and city planning, and will be a trusted handbook for city managers, geographers, city planners, urban or rural sociologists, political scientists, and regional microeconomists.

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