Top 10 Books – 2009

Planetizen is pleased to release its eighth annual list of the ten best books in the planning field. With titles covering some of the most timely issues in planning -- from form-based codes to exploding growth in China -- the list gives readers an overview of the best ideas and writing in the field.

The Planetizen editorial staff based its 2009 edition list on a number of criteria, including editorial reviews, sales rankings, popularity, Planetizen reader nominations, number of references, recommendations from experts and the book's potential impact on the urban planning, development and design professions.

One particular trend we're seeing is the growth of "hypertext" books, books that mimic the feel and content of the web in their presentation. Hyperborder, The Endless City and Century of the City all fall into that category. As e-publishing grows in popularity, these sorts of hybrids will probably be more common.

We present our list in alphabetical order, and are not assigning rank. And now, on to the list!

Who’s Your City?
by Richard Florida
Basic Books, 374 Pages

Almost like a self-help book for that amorphous relationship between people and places, Who’s Your City? focuses mainly on how choosing a place to live is increasingly one of the most important decisions people make. Expanding on the themes of his previous work, Florida shows how certain types of people are attracted to certain types of places and that ending up in the right place has as much to do with personal preferences as it does with prevailing economic factors and professional trends. This book should be read by anyone considering making a move. More importantly, it should be read by cities to
get them thinking about what it is they do best, what kind of people they’re attracting, and whether they want – or need -- to change.