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OF LAND POLICY

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### [Improving Tax Increment Financing \(TIF\) for Economic Development](#) By David Merriman

Virtually every U.S. state allows some form of tax increment financing (TIF) — using the increased property tax revenues generated by new development or real estate appreciation to fund economic development activities in the area that generates the revenues. Yet the fundamental attributes of TIF are still poorly understood, and its effectiveness is controversial. This report presents basic data about TIF usage, explains how it is intended to work, notes its conceptual strengths and limitations, reviews academic evaluations of its use, and suggests methods for improving its design.



### [The Empty House Next Door](#)

## Understanding and Reducing Vacancy and Hypervacancy in the United States

By Alan Mallach

Renowned city planner and housing advocate Alan Mallach assesses the problem of vacant properties in the United States and recommends mitigation strategies for local officials, nonprofits, and community leaders. Vacancies in the United States skyrocketed during the Great Recession. While many cities with robust demand for housing have recovered, the picture is very different in the nation's legacy cities — the former industrial centers of the American heartland. The examples in this report illustrate creative strategies to reduce the harm caused by vacant properties, jump-start housing markets in struggling neighborhoods, create the potential for future revival, and transform vacant properties into community assets.



### [Revitalizing America's Smaller Legacy Cities](#)

## Strategies for Postindustrial Success from Gary to Lowell

By Torey Hollingsworth and Alison Goebel

This report examines the unique challenges of smaller American legacy cities — older industrial centers with populations of less than 200,000, located primarily in the Midwest and Northeast. These cities are critical sites for a number of global economic and demographic transformations, and they must fundamentally reconsider how to rebuild and sustain strong economies, housing markets, and workforces. This report identifies replicable strategies that have helped smaller legacy cities weather these transformations, find their competitive edge, and transform into thriving, sustainable communities.



### [Reinventing Development Regulations](#)

By Jonathan Barnett and Brian W. Blaesser

In this practical guide, two experts argue that municipal leaders can dramatically improve the quality of life in their communities by adjusting local land use regulations. Development regulations determine the form of our cities, suburbs, and towns, but current regulations have structural deficiencies and biases that must be corrected for communities to address 21st-century land use challenges. Barnett, one of the pioneers of the modern practice of city design, and Blaesser, a land use and real estate lawyer, lay out strategies to preserve the natural environment, create desirable civic spaces, conserve historic buildings, reduce housing inequality, ease the pressures of urban sprawl, and deal with floods, erosion, and wildfire.

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Edited by Riël Franssen and William McCluskey

[Nature and Cities — Now Available as an Ebook!](#)

[The Ecological Imperative in Urban Design and Planning](#)

Edited by Frederick R. Steiner, George F. Thompson, and Armando Carbonell

Named one of the American Society of Landscape Architects' Best Books of 2016, this collection of essays explores the economic, environmental, and public health benefits of integrating nature more fully into cities.

**Maureen Clarke**

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