

Austin's Recommended Book List

Last Updated September 22, 2024

MY TOP 8 MULTI-DISCIPLINARY READING LIST TO BE WELL ROUNDED IN THE INDUSTRY

1. [Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream](#) - Duany/Plater-Zyberk/
Best overview outlining the problem of suburban sprawl, its effects, and the time-tested alternative.
2. [The Architecture of Community](#) - Leon Krier
Understanding the philosophical foundation of traditional architecture, as well as practical applications
3. [A Pattern Language](#) - Christopher Alexander
Understanding architecture from a humanist and experiential perspective.
4. [Structures: Or Why Things Don't Fall Down](#) - J.E Gordon
Engineering 101, for the non-engineer, to understand the basic mechanics.
5. [Escaping the Housing Trap](#) - Charles Marohn & Daniel Herriges
Why housing isn't affordable, and what to do about it.
6. [Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity](#) - Charles Marohn
How suburban sprawl is incentivized, subsidized, and economically unsustainable – and what to do about it.
7. [The Bitcoin Standard: The Decentralized Alternative to Central Banking](#) - Saifedean Ammous
*The history of money and how it shapes incentives and culture (not endorsing bitcoin/crypto).
Understanding hard versus easy money, low versus high time preference, and how inflation has stolen unimaginable wealth and power from people and communities.*
8. [The Omnivore's Dilemma](#) - Michael Pollan
Understanding the Industrial-Food-Complex, American's atrocious health, how to be healthier, and seeing the parallels with the architecture and building industry.

DESIGN & BUILDING PHILOSOPHY

[The Architecture of Community](#) - Leon Krier

[Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream](#) - Andres Duany, Plater-Zyberk, Jeff Speck

[The Timeless Way of Building](#) - Christopher Alexander

[A Pattern Language](#) - Christopher Alexander

[The Death and Life of Great American Cities](#) - Jane Jacobs

[The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape](#) - James Kunstler

[Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time](#) - Jeff Speck

[Get Your House Right: Architectural Elements to Use and Avoid](#) - Marianne Cusato

[How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built](#) - Stewart Brand

[Happy City: Transforming Our Lives Through Urban Design](#) - Charles Montgomery

TECHNICAL & ENGINEERING

[The Stone Skeleton](#) - Jacques Heyman

Understand the mechanics of masonry structures. Difficult to comprehend for non-engineers, but important nonetheless for designers or anyone interested in rediscovering load bearing masonry.

[Structures: Or Why Things Don't Fall Down](#) - J.E Gordon

Engineering 101, for the non-engineer, to understand the basic mechanics.

INDUSTRY & ECONOMICS

In the context of architecture, urbanism, housing and long-term resilience

[Escaping the Housing Trap](#) - Charles Marohn & Daniel Herriges

Why housing isn't affordable, and what to do about it.

[Strong Towns: A Bottom-Up Revolution to Rebuild American Prosperity](#) - Charles Marohn

How suburban sprawl is incentivized, subsidized, and economically unsustainable – and why to have hope for the future.

[The Bitcoin Standard: The Decentralized Alternative to Central Banking](#) - Saifedean Ammous

The history of money and how it shapes incentives and culture (not endorsing bitcoin/crypto). Understanding hard versus easy money, low versus high time preference, and how inflation has stolen unimaginable wealth and power from people and communities.

[Gangs of America: The Rise of Corporate Power and the Disabling of Democracy](#) - Ted Nace

Fascinating read about how corporations became so powerful, slowly and incrementally over hundreds of years, without the approval of elected officials, and in opposition to the vision of the Founding Fathers.

BUSINESS

[Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't](#) - Jim Collins

[Creativity, Inc: Overcoming the Unseen Forces that Stand in the Way of True Inspiration](#) - Ed Catmull

[Make Something Wonderful](#) - Steve Jobs

[Raising Capital for Real Estate: How to Attract Investors, Establish Credibility and Fund Deals](#) - Hunter Thompson

HEALTH & WELLNESS

[The Omnivore's Dilemma](#) - Michael Pollan

Understanding the Industrial-Food-Complex, American's atrocious health, how to be healthier, and seeing the parallels with the architecture and building industry.

[In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto](#) - Michael Pollan