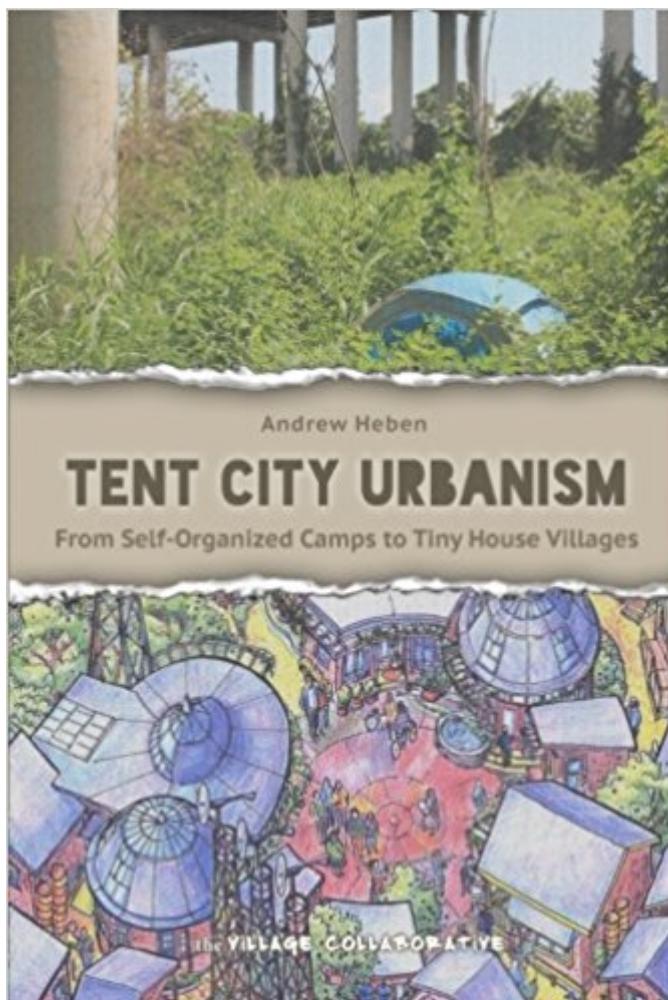


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# Tent City Urbanism: From Self-Organized Camps To Tiny House Villages



## **Synopsis**

Tent City Urbanism explores the intersection of the "tiny house movement" and tent cities organized by the homeless to present an accessible and sustainable housing paradigm that can improve the quality of life for everyone. While tent cities tend to evoke either sympathy or disgust, the author finds such informal settlements actually address many of the shortfalls of more formal responses to homelessness. Tent cities often exemplify self-management, direct democracy, tolerance, mutual aid, and resourceful strategies for living with less. This book presents a vision for how cities can constructively build upon these positive dynamics rather than continuing to seek evictions and pay the high costs of policing homelessness. The tiny house village provides a path forward to transitional and affordable housing within the grasp of a local community. It offers a bottom-up approach to the provision of shelter that is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable--both for the individual and the city. The concept was first pioneered by Portland's Dignity Village, and has since been re-imagined by Eugene's Opportunity Village and Olympia's Quixote Village. Now this innovative model has emerged from the Northwest to inspire projects in Madison, Austin, and Ithaca, and is being pursued by advocacy groups throughout the country. Along with documenting and articulating the roots of this budding movement, the book provides a practical guide to help catalyze new and existing initiatives in other areas.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"A very pragmatic approach that was inspirational to getting people in our community to see what could and should be done." -- Kitty Piercy, mayor of Eugene, OR "Every town, city, suburb in

America needs a place for our citizens to retreat to when the American Dream hasn't exactly worked out for them. This can happen to any of us. Imagine the least that would honor you as a human being until you're ready to plug in again. A place of refuge, to dry out, to learn work skills, and to get the confidence you need to succeed. Andrew's village model and this book will help you learn how to do just that." - Charles Durrett, author of *Creating Cohousing* "The vision to create a living place of vitality, safety, and human scale is an indomitable urge that likely resides in all people. That said, Opportunity Village, supported mightily by Andrew Heben, has taken the lead in demonstrating the remarkable inspiring effects and healing power of such a vision in action. The idea that a group of people can undertake democratic processes in such a way that they repair themselves and create a sustainable expression of place will be of interest to everyone." - Mark Lakeman, co-founder of City Repair "A very pragmatic approach that was inspirational to getting people in our community to see what could and should be done." - Kitty Piercy, mayor of Eugene, OR "Every town, city, suburb in America needs a place for our citizens to retreat to when the American Dream hasn't exactly worked out for them. This can happen to any of us. Imagine the least that would honor you as a human being until you're ready to plug in again. A place of refuge, to dry out, to learn work skills, and to get the confidence you need to succeed. Andrew's village model and this book will help you learn how to do just that." - Charles Durrett, author of *Creating Cohousing*

Andrew Heben is an urban planner, writer, and tiny house builder based in Eugene, Oregon. He has traveled throughout the U.S. to study over a dozen tent cities organized by the homeless, and spent time living at one in Ann Arbor, Michigan known as Camp Take Notice. This experience informed his 2011 award-winning thesis in urban planning at the University of Cincinnati. Heben has since helped co-found Opportunity Village Eugene (OVE), a non-profit organization that advocates for and builds self-managed tiny house villages. In 2013 he assisted in the planning, design, and building of Opportunity Village, which now houses more than 30 otherwise homeless individuals and couples at a time. This work, combined with his previous research, inspired Heben's new book, *Tent City Urbanism: From Self-Organized Camps to Tiny House Villages*.

Andrew's book is a wealth of knowledge. The information in this book has helped me start building a community for Huntsville's homeless. It is my #1 resource and I carry it to every meeting. So glad that those who have gone before us were willing to put all their knowledge in one place so we can all learn from each other. Definitely recommend this book!

An excellent book combining some good history of the homeless problems and earlier solutions, and some contemporary data on experiments, many on the west coast in Oregon. It might even be seen as a manual with good ideas for bringing a community around to experiment with homeless camping, morphing into more permanent communities. It is quite hopeful in its examples. Well written and concise.

This book represents the cutting edge of experience and expertise in the field of Tiny House Villages as a response to homelessness and housing-insecurity. I highly recommend it to anyone concerned with finding affordable ways to address these problems. And if you get a chance, go watch a presentation by Andy Heben if you are lucky enough to have him speaking anywhere near you. It will be time well-spent!

This was a great book recommended to me by Tom Atlee. The book has utterly practical information, born from experience and story. Steps to take. Agreements to share. It also has insightful reframing of issues and challenges in economic paradigms. From "homeless" to "unhoused." Thank you Andrew. A good read for anyone working with homelessness / unhoused issues.

An excellent reference book on building a supportive environment for people who don't have access to traditional housing. I have purchased 2 copies so far--one for me and a loner, since the loner has a "waiting list" I may purchase a third!

Great book

Awesome

This is one of the best urban planning books of the year, following on my favorite from last year, the Accidental Playground--it will really shake up your worldview. Heben explores, using first hand observations and data combined with well grounded theory and historical context, the great American tent-city and its evolving relationship to the tiny house movement. It's part critique and analysis, part deeply empathetic anthropology, and part how-to manual. In a time where it's really easy to be negative and talk about what can't be done, it's great to see someone interested in what does work. I was particularly struck by how the themes expressed here about the unhoused

population resonate with my own work around participatory/tactical urbanism. We middle-class types have become mere consumers of the city, not producers or maintainers of our urbanity. The intense professionalization and othering of the development world means that many citizen activists have no voice other than protest to influence the evolution of their city. My hope is that by showing that even non-professionals, non-wealthy citizen can make a mark on the city we can heal the rifts that are creating barriers to change. This book will help you see how. Excellent.

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