



Light Imprint Handbook: Integrating Sustainability and Community Design

By Thomas E. Low

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What is Light Imprint (LI)? Light Imprint is a green approach to neighborhood design. It employs New Urbanist principles to create compact, walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods. To this, it adds a tool box of techniques to manage stormwater and natural drainage—an ever present environmental challenge that plays a major role in shaping cities and towns. The Tools This little book lays out an array of Light Imprint tools, each shown in the context of an actual New Urbanist project. You will find more than sixty techniques for paving streets and walkways, channeling and storing water, and filtering surface runoff before release into the underground water table. The tools are useful in both new development and existing communities. Done thoughtfully, this seemingly mundane engineering work not only improves the environment, but also can make neighborhoods more beautiful and livable. The Transect Beware, not every tool will work in every situation. That is why we have organized them according to an idea borrowed from New Urbanism: the transect. What is the transect? Well, imagine a slice of land, extending from the most rural countryside to the heart of a skyscraper city. Here, on the opposite page, is a sketch. Look at it, and it is easy to begin to visualize how different approaches work best in particular areas. Hard-surface streets and sidewalks are essential in the heavily trafficked urban core, for instance, but a gravel lane might suffice in a rural district. By fitting the right tool to the right situation, it is possible to save money, improve environmental efficiency, and build in beauty. Who is this book for? Anyone who cares about neighborhoods including: Planners, Developers, Architects, Engineers, Public Officials, Investors, and Community Activists.

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- Sales Rank: #666213 in Books
- Published on: 2010-01-31
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.51" h x 1.05" w x 5.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 350 pages

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Thomas E. Low is director of town planning, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, Charlotte, North Carolina, and chair of Civic By Design Forum, Charlotte, North Carolina.

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