

## From the Planners' Bookshelf...

### Sustaining a City's Culture and Character, Principles and Best Practices.

By Charles R. Wolfe, Contributor:Tigran Haas,  
Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Incorp, 2021.

**LINK:** <https://rowman.com/isbn/9781538133255>

#### Summary from Rowman and Littlefield:

Somewhere, between character and caricature, there exists an authentic—a truly unique—urban place, that blends global and local, old and new. Yet, in a dramatically changing world dominated by crises of climate change, maintaining public health, and social justice, finding such places—and explaining their relevance—may be easier said than done.

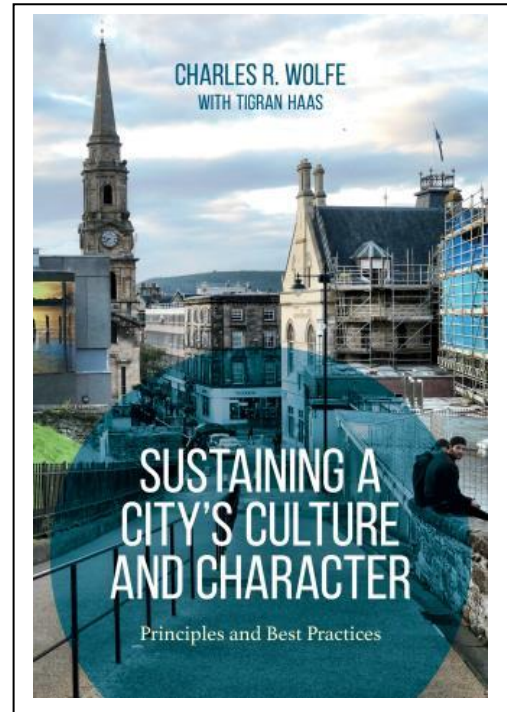
Sustaining a City's Culture and Character accepts that challenge, and provides a comprehensive method for assessing how and why successful places come to be, with an explicit emphasis on context: Authenticity, culture, character, and uniqueness are words with meanings that depend on who is using them and in what contexts.

Through text interwoven with 160 full-color photographs by the author, and select illustrations by others, this book addresses how to enact blended and contextualized urban change, using the past and the status quo as catalysts rather than castaways.

It provides resources and examples for the context-vetting process and for understanding how one era, object, or generation informs the next. This beautiful full-color book illustrates how we can understand—or unlock—a public place, neighborhood, or city. Based on comparative experiences around the world, the book proposes a new tool—called LEARN (Look, Engage, Assess, Review, and Negotiate)—as a way of sustaining urban culture and character in transformative times. Inspired by recent efforts and outcomes, the book is full of relevant examples.

They include moving a small Swedish city, reviving Irish market towns, and revitalization efforts adjacent to London's Waterloo Station. Sustaining a City's Culture and Character provides a catalog of techniques that emphasize "bottom up," resident-based input about local history, building forms, natural and open spaces, cultural assets and tradition, and related policy, planning, and regulatory examples. For those who seek an urbanism of distinctiveness to enhance city livability, rather than a bland, generic uniformity, the book examines on a global basis how the many interrelated facets of an urban area's unique, yet dynamic context—built, social, cultural and intangible—can be championed and advanced, rather than simply borrowed from another place.

**Source:** Publisher, [Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Incorporated](https://rowman.com).  
Also a Googlebook <https://books.google.com/>



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**CHUCK WOLFE** is a multinational urbanism consultant, author, Visiting Scholar in Sweden, recent Fulbright Specialist in Australia for an award-winning project, and long-time American environmental/land use lawyer.