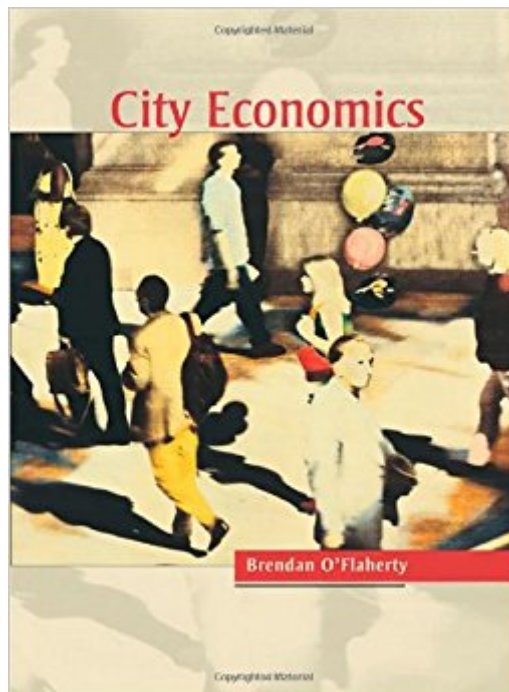


The book was found

City Economics



Synopsis

This introductory but innovative textbook on the economics of cities is aimed at students of urban and regional policy as well as of undergraduate economics. It deals with standard topics, including automobiles, mass transit, pollution, housing, and education but it also discusses non-standard topics such as segregation, water supply, sewers, garbage, fire prevention, housing codes, homelessness, crime, illicit drugs, and economic development. Its methods of analysis are primarily verbal, geometric, and arithmetic. The author achieves coherence by showing how the analysis of various topics reinforces one another. Thus, buses can tell us something about schools and optimal tolls about land prices. Brendan O'Flaherty looks at almost everything through the lens of Pareto optimality and potential Pareto optimality--how policies affect people and their well-being, not abstract entities such as cities or the economy or growth or the environment. Such traditionalism leads to radical questions, however: Should cities have police and fire departments? Should tax preferences for home ownership be repealed? Should public schools charge for their services? O'Flaherty also gives serious consideration to such heterodox policies as pay-at-the-pump auto insurance, curb rights for buses, land taxes, marginal cost water pricing, and sidewalk zoning.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This brilliant book, half textbook, half treatise, provides a magisterial overview of city economics that tempers an optimistic vision of the city's potential for advancing the human condition with a recognition of the constraints imposed by scarcity. In contrast to other urban economics textbooks,

this book eschews unnecessary technique, draws widely from the other social sciences, and devotes considerable attention to urban social problems. And in contrast to other urbanist treatises, it stresses analytical reasoning and confronts squarely the difficult tradeoffs involved in almost all policy choices. Written in a conversational style, *City Economics* – which might be subtitled the very intelligent layman's guide to urban economics – demands concentration but the perseverant reader will be richly rewarded. (Richard Arnott, Boston College)

City Economics is provocative, thoughtful, engaging, and challenging. O'Flaherty deals with broad and important themes in imaginative and straightforward ways, and this book will instruct and inspire students for a generation. (Kenneth T. Jackson, Columbia University, and editor of *The Encyclopedia of New York City*)

City Economics is an engaging book for those who want to know how to make cities better for living, working, and playing. Students, scholars and public officials all can learn from this non-traditional though disciplined-based approach to urban economics. (Susan Wachter, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania)

This book is firmly located in urban economics, and it adopts a deliberate and provocative approach to the usual subject headings and methodological debates in this area. It will be attractive to undergraduates in geography, economics, sociology and politics as well as to taught masters in courses in public administration, urban policy, public policy, transport and government. Students and teachers will be attracted to its no-nonsense style and its focus on recognisable subject areas...Each chapter is followed by questions suitable for those wanting to check on their progress and for teachers looking for succinct questions to put to students. This approach works well; as a textbook, *City Economics* has much to recommend it. Indeed, for many readers the text will be a welcome relief from the esoteric world of Pareto optimality, comparative advantage, externalities, consumer surplus and elasticities, concepts that would normally dominate in this kind of book. Brendan O'Flaherty's approach is more likely to reveal the importance and relevance of these concepts and tools than the usual methodological exposition...*City Economics* is challenging and fascinating. (John Whitelegg *Times Higher Education Supplement* 2006-10-13)

Brendan O'Flaherty is Professor of Economics at Columbia University.

I learned a lot from this book! I recommend.

This is one of my favorite economics books, delivering many of the key insights from economics with minimum jargon/math and in a context that most people find interesting, intuitive, and relatable

-- how cities work. If it were a bit cheaper, I'd buy a copy for all of my friends and family.

This is an interesting book that covers all the main topics of an Urban Economics course. The writing style is unique and really provides a great compliment to more traditional style Urban textbooks. I recommend the book to anyone trying to learn more about this field.

I usually hate economics, but this book has really presented the information that is easy to understand, and easy to incorporate into decision making. I strongly recommend it!

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