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When city planners and designers are given the ideal assignment to build a new city in the wilderness, unencumbered by an existing urban matrix and, at the same time, the site is located in the midst of a resource-rich region that attracts a rapid influx of people who proceed to build for themselves a burgeoning boomtown of indigenous settlements, planned without planners, conflicts are almost inevitable.

This book, based on the experience of Ciudad Guayana in Venezuela, demonstrates that the deeper conflicts between planners and people are not only the result of clashes of value or intent but are as much reflections of basic differences in perception. The planner sees his model of the projected city as a totality, from above; the inhabitant sees the present reality, from street level. The planner's map is a multicolored physical reality; the inhabitant constructs and constantly revises his mental map as experience interacts with memory.

The MIT-Harvard Joint Center for Urban Studies has been involved with the planning of Ciudad Guayana from the time it was a gleam in the planners' eyes (The MIT Press has published several reports by participants in the project), and Donald Appleyard spent a number of summers at the site. The Joint Center has also sponsored pathfinding studies of urban perception and environmental cognition, notably Kevin Lynch's *The Image of the City* and Appleyard's *The View from the Road* (written with Lynch and John R. Myer). The book at hand is the product of the fruitful union of these two interests, a convergence of a subject and a methodology that illuminates both.

The author writes that "Ciudad Guayana was many cities in one. Different people knew it in different ways. Their perceptions of its parts, their predictions of how it might grow varied from group to group and from person to person. Citizens viewed the city in different ways depending on their backgrounds, familiarity with the city, patterns of use, educational level, and methods of transportation..."

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The book pays particular attention "to certain aspects of environmental meaning by exploring how well the city's functional and social pattern, economic base, and natural environment are communicated to and accurately interpreted by its inhabitants," and describes "the inhabitants' perceptions of environmental change, remembered past, perceived present, expected future, and knowledge of the city's future plans..."

Policies, strategies, and techniques for planning cities which grow out of the pluralist character of their populations are proposed.