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For most of his career, architect Mario Gandelsonas has been exploring the American city through his writings, designs, lectures, and, above all, through a series of remarkable analytical drawings. X-Urbanism raises questions about the form of the city by examining various configurations of urban space, analyzing them in ways that blur the traditional opposition between figure and ground. This title serves as a visual lexicon of the formal properties of American urbanism--fabric, void, grid, wall--that reveal the hidden structure of the cities New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago, New Haven, Des Moines, and Atlantic City. In the process, X-Urbanism confounds our expectations: it shows us the subtle order of chaotic Los Angeles, and the disruptions of New York's rigorous grid.

X-Urbanism carefully reproduces Gandelsonas's drawings, which range from crisp, elegant pen-and-ink to colorful computer renderings and are as beautiful as they are instructive. Mario Gandelsonas is a professor of architecture at Princeton University who has also taught at Yale, the University of Illinois, Harvard University, and the Rhode Island School of Design.