

THEORY OF CITY FORM  
THREE NORMATIVE MODELS

MODEL	Condition	State	Objectives	Control	Science	Nature	Type	Form Tools
COSMIC	Stasis	Cosmic and earthly harmony	Satisfying inner and outer needs	Divine and autocratic	Geomancy and astrobiology	Nature as symbol	Capitals and centers	Axes, cardinal points, finite grids, and marked places
MACHINE	Dynamics	Change and growth	Simplifying complexity for speedy outcome	Colonial, market and modern industrial	Geometry and Surveying	Nature as accident or opponent	Colonial and new towns	Open networks and linearity
ORGANIC	Homeostasis	Ideal, ecological state	Obtaining the proper balance	Humanistic and democratic	Human biology	Nature as integration	New towns and suburbs	Curves, centers and rings

## COSMIC MODEL

### Elements

1. Returning
2. Natural Phenomena
3. Celestial Measurement
4. Fixing Location
5. Centeredness
6. Boundary Definition
7. Earth Images
8. Land Geometry
9. Directionality
10. Place Consciousness
11. Numerology

### Components of a theory

1. Method for finding a good site
2. marking boundaries
3. subdividing land
4. determining center
5. connecting to celestial forms
6. fixing coordinates
7. controlling change
8. determining social structure
9. codifying explicit rules
10. coordinating physics and meta-
11. reinforcing form through ritual

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

4.241J / 11.330J Theory of City Form  
Spring 2013

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.