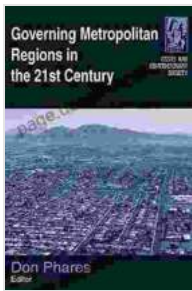


Governing Metropolitan Regions in the 21st Century: Cities and Contemporary Challenges

Metropolitan regions are home to a majority of the world's population and are engines of economic growth. However, they also face a number of challenges, including:

- **Rapid urbanization:** The world's population is expected to grow by 2.5 billion people by 2050, and most of this growth will occur in urban areas. This rapid urbanization is putting a strain on infrastructure and services, and it can lead to social and economic problems.
- **Climate change:** Metropolitan regions are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as sea level rise, flooding, and extreme heat. These effects can damage infrastructure, displace people, and harm the environment.
- **Economic inequality:** Metropolitan regions are often home to both great wealth and great poverty. This inequality can lead to social unrest and political instability.
- **Governance challenges:** Metropolitan regions are often governed by a complex web of local, regional, and state agencies. This can make it difficult to coordinate policies and to address the challenges facing the region.

These challenges require a new approach to governance. Metropolitan regions need to adopt more effective and innovative ways to:



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by Richard K. Scher

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- **Plan for the future:** Metropolitan regions need to develop long-term plans to address the challenges they face. These plans should be based on evidence and should involve a wide range of stakeholders.
- **Coordinate policies:** Metropolitan regions need to coordinate policies across all levels of government. This includes planning, transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental protection.
- **Engage citizens:** Metropolitan regions need to engage citizens in the decision-making process. This can be done through public meetings, online forums, and other methods.
- **Invest in infrastructure:** Metropolitan regions need to invest in infrastructure to support their growing population and economy. This includes transportation, water, energy, and other essential services.
- **Promote economic development:** Metropolitan regions need to promote economic development to create jobs and improve the quality of life for their residents.

Technology can play a key role in helping metropolitan regions address these challenges. For example, technology can be used to:

- **Improve planning:** Technology can be used to collect and analyze data on population, economic activity, and environmental conditions. This data can be used to inform planning decisions and to identify potential problems.
- **Coordinate policies:** Technology can be used to share information and coordinate policies across different levels of government. This can help to ensure that policies are consistent and that they are implemented effectively.
- **Engage citizens:** Technology can be used to engage citizens in the decision-making process. This can be done through online forums, social media, and other methods.
- **Improve infrastructure:** Technology can be used to improve infrastructure, such as transportation systems and energy grids. This can help to make metropolitan regions more efficient and sustainable.
- **Promote economic development:** Technology can be used to promote economic development by connecting businesses with customers, investors, and suppliers. This can help to create jobs and improve the quality of life for residents.

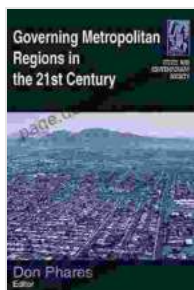
There are a number of successful metropolitan regions around the world that have adopted innovative approaches to governance. These regions have shown that it is possible to address the challenges facing metropolitan regions and to create more livable, sustainable, and prosperous communities.

Here are a few examples of successful metropolitan regions:

- **Greater Tokyo Area, Japan:** The Greater Tokyo Area is the most populous metropolitan region in the world, with over 37 million people. It is also one of the most economically developed regions in the world. The Greater Tokyo Area has adopted a number of innovative approaches to governance, including a strong focus on planning and coordination. The region has also invested heavily in infrastructure, which has helped to make it one of the most livable and sustainable metropolitan regions in the world.
- **London, United Kingdom:** London is one of the most important financial and cultural centers in the world. It is also one of the most diverse metropolitan regions in the world, with people from over 200 different countries. London has adopted a number of innovative approaches to governance, including a strong focus on citizen engagement. The region has also invested heavily in infrastructure and public transportation, which has helped to make it one of the most livable metropolitan regions in the world.
- **San Francisco Bay Area, United States:** The San Francisco Bay Area is one of the most innovative and technologically advanced metropolitan regions in the world. It is home to a number of leading technology companies, including Google, Apple, and Facebook. The San Francisco Bay Area has adopted a number of innovative approaches to governance, including a strong focus on economic development and sustainability. The region has also invested heavily in infrastructure and public transportation, which has helped to make it one of the most livable metropolitan regions in the world.

These are just a few examples of successful metropolitan regions around the world. There are many other regions that are also doing innovative work to address the challenges facing metropolitan regions and to create more livable, sustainable, and prosperous communities.

The challenges facing metropolitan regions in the 21st century are significant, but they are not insurmountable. By adopting more effective and innovative approaches to governance, metropolitan regions can create more livable, sustainable, and prosperous communities for their residents.



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