

## Challenges Faced By Municipal Governments

The first section of this paper presents a model of local government finance based on the benefits received from local government services. It includes discussion of the role of local government and the appropriate financing tools to carry out this role. The second section reviews the sources of revenues used by municipal governments, outlines recent trends in the use of these revenues, and evaluates the extent to which these trends have been consistent with the benefit model of local finance. The third section reviews planning tools used by municipal governments, highlights recent trends in planning, and discusses the relationship between planning and municipal finance. The fourth section analyzes the impact on land use decisions of three sources of revenue currently used by Canadian municipalities: user fees, property taxes, and development charges. The fifth section considers the potential impact of two sources not currently used: site value taxes and land value capture taxes. The sixth section summarizes the findings and discusses the implications of using tax policy to achieve land use objectives. Some of the very best writings on issues involving local government can be found in journals published by the American Society for Public Administration or journals with which ASPA is associated. This volume includes thirty of the most outstanding articles that have been published over the past sixty years in these journals. Local Government Management is an ideal supplement for any course in local management and administration, whether the audience is students or practicing professionals.

### Fiscal Austerity and Innovation in Local Governance in Europe

Routledge

This book provides a descriptive analysis of how public administrators manage municipal government. Using examples from the United States, it explores six dimensions of public administration: legal aspects of public management; human resources management; budgeting and public finance; the political dimension; intergovernmental relations and ethical considerations. As well as theory, the authors address such practical issues as economic development, housing, culture and recreation, public safety, transportation and waste disposal.

In the efficient delivery of local public services, size matters. Many countries around the world have vertical government structures that are perceived as inefficient because of their high levels of jurisdictional fragmentation. This timely volume examines the different strategies used to address local government fragmentation and their observed results and consequences. Expert contributors in economics and political science offer a comprehensive breakdown of the issue of local jurisdiction fragmentation and provide recommendations for successful policy reform. Topics discussed include economies of scale, the costs and benefits of voluntary and forced amalgamation programs, the correlation between government size and corruption, privatization, and inter-municipal cooperation. A combination of theory and empirical evidence provides depth and makes this book an invaluable addition to the literature. Economists, public administrators and political scientists will find much of interest in this innovative volume, as will professors, students and international institutions with an interest in local government structure and reform.

A handbook aimed at councillors and community leaders that deals with the challenges facing local government. Topics include the role of the councillor, strategic planning, budgets, services and development and how the participation of women can be encouraged.

Through close investigation into the industrial, organizational, and social governance of industrial associations in Wenzhou and in-depth analysis of their challenges and developments within the institutional context, this book explores the non-western path for civil society development in China and provides fresh empirical evidence and insightful analysis of how industrial associations have actively participated

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in local industrial governance and conduct of public affairs, gained greater space for their development, and become indispensable partners of local government in social governance.

The purpose of the research summarized in this paper is to provide policy-relevant knowledge on the governance of rural services in Guatemala and thus to contribute to improving the provision of services that are essential for agricultural and rural development. Almost 10 years ago, the Guatemalan government decided to strengthen decentralization and community participation to improve the quality of public services, as well as access to these services for the poor, especially in rural areas. Based on quantitative and qualitative primary data, we examine how services are actually provided today and how community preferences and participation affect service provision in rural Guatemala. Our main finding is that the provision of formally decentralized services by local governments is incomplete. As a result, many rural communities continue to lack access to services, and some of them engage in supplying these services themselves. However, communities do not consider themselves to be more effective at service provision and would therefore prefer to be served by the government. Moreover, we find that community participation in the planning and evaluation of services has a positive impact on the responsiveness of the local government's service provision. However, the effectiveness of community participation varies greatly among the examined cases, with several participatory governance bodies not functioning properly due to low education levels, poverty, and weak civil-society organization.

The objective of this thesis is to provide guidance for Canadian municipal public administrators concerning the economic and legal criteria in the policy design and implementation of user fees. User fees are levies charged for a particular good or service, as compared to a tax, which is charged generally and not specifically allocated. The focus on municipalities is as a result of the unique revenue limitations faced by municipal governments. The thesis is based on a public administration framework that establishes four stages of public policy analysis: problem definition, design, implementation, and evaluation. With a focus on the design and implementation stages, this thesis clarifies the economic literature and jurisprudence in their respective disciplines and sets out design and implementation stage criteria that integrate both disciplines with a view to improving Canadian municipal user fee design and implementation.

Local governments are becoming increasingly important around the world and functions are being shifted across levels of government. This timely comparative analysis breaks new ground in the study of multilevel governance, intergovernmental relations, and municipal government. Spheres of Governance systematically compares the challenges faced by municipalities in Australia, France, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States, with emphasis on the relationship between the municipal and federal levels. Each chapter analyzes a municipality in relation to its responsibilities, functions, and organization; constitutional and fiscal position; relations with the central government; provincial and state governments mediation of these relationships; and public policy development, especially with regard to emergency planning and immigration and settlement. The chapters also highlight the tensions and pressures for change in the systems.

Global warming is changing the world as we know it. Climate change can have catastrophic impacts in numerous cities across the

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world. It is time for us to react – quickly and effectively. The European Community (EC) has been leading the fight against climate change, making it one of its top priorities. We have introduced the most ambitious targets of their kind, known as the “20/20/20 by 2020” initiative within the “Climate Action and Renewable Energy Package.” As a result, European Member States have taken on a commitment to curb their CO emissions by at least 20% by 2020. 2 These targets are indeed commendable; however, they are only the start if we are to avoid the consequences of global warming. Whilst top level coordination from the European Institutions and Member State governments is vital, the role of mitigating and adapting to climate change at local level must not be forgotten. In fact, here cities, regions and their citizens play a significant a role. It is therefore vital they become directly involved in the climate change challenge. The European Commission therefore launched in 2008 a new initiative, the Covenant of Mayors, which brings together a network of European mayors in a voluntary effort to go beyond the European Union’s already ambitious targets. Half of our greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) are created in and by cities.

Budgeting for Local Governments and Communities is designed as the primary textbook for a quarter or semester-long course in public budgeting and finance in an MPA programme. Many currently available texts for this course suffer from a combination of defects that include a focus on federal and state budgeting, a lack of a theoretical governance framework, an omission of important topics, and typically a lack of exercises and datasets for student use. Budgeting for Local Governments and Communities solves all of these problems. The book is exceptionally comprehensive and well written, and represents the efforts of veteran authors with both teaching and real-world experience. Key Features: Special Focus on Local Government Budgeting: focuses exclusively on budgeting at the local levels of American government, which are responsible for spending 40 percent of the taxes collected from citizens. Integration of Theory and Practice: teaching cases and chapters capture the "lessons learned" by professional practitioners who have extensive experience in making local public budgeting work on the ground. Polity Approach to Local Budgeting: presents an introduction to local budgeting as the central political activity that integrates the resources of the community into a unified whole. Budgeting is presented as governance work, rather than as a unique set of skills possessed by analysts and financial specialists. Legal, Historical, Economic and Moral Foundations of Local Government Budgeting: provides readers with an understanding of how the structures and processes of local budgeting systems are firmly tethered to the underlying core values, legal principles and historical development of the larger American federal, state and local political systems. Electronic Datasets and Budgeting Exercises: the text includes access to extensive electronic datasets and practice exercises that provide abundant opportunities for students to "learn through doing." Extensive Glossary and Bibliography: covers terms on the history and practice of local public budgeting.

Local governments in Alberta have faced considerable and variable challenges over the past 60 years. For example, the rapid population and economic growth during the 1950s, '60s and '70s created exceptional demands for schools, schooling and municipal infrastructure; demands exceeding those of the last 30 years. Local and especially municipal financing has relied heavily on the property tax throughout. Questions are being asked today about whether the property tax is sufficient for municipal

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government. Our historical analysis provides insights into the fiscal situation of Alberta's municipalities that can assist in addressing those questions.

The dissertation examines the political challenges of public utility reform through the analysis of urban water and sanitation services in Mexico. Decentralization of services to municipal governments was coupled with promotion of "market-based" policies in the 1980s and 1990s. However, the unpopularity of these policies provided political obstacles for mayors now charged with reforming the sector because many consumers were not accustomed to paying for water services. These policies--increased water prices, rigorous fee collection practices, and service suspension for non-payment--were political costs felt in the short-term, whereas the benefits of reform were long-term service improvements in water quality and quantity, reduced environmental pollution, and increased economic and social development. This problem of time inconsistency is a challenge even for pro-reform mayors because mayors in Mexico have a narrow window of time within which to enact policy. Mayoral administrations are three years long with no immediate re-election, and bureaucratic administrators follow the electoral cycle, which further exacerbates the challenge of long-term policymaking. Based on a comparative analysis of nine Mexican municipalities, I argue that mayors whose constituent base is primarily composed of middle and upper income consumers and business are more likely to reform because these groups are more able to pay short-term costs for long-term service improvements than the urban poor. With the support of a pro-reform mayor, reform is likely under two conditions: a) the presence of a water intensive industry and b) institutional support from the state government. Water intensive industry prioritizes improvement in service delivery, calculates costs based on the long run, and, further, has long-term financial and professional ties in the community. Water intensive industry is well positioned to support the policy process over time by participating in the leadership of the water utility board of directors. Also, water intensive industry can help offset the costs of reform because it pays more per cubic meter through a block tariff pricing scheme, a policy that subsidizes domestic consumers and helps to finance the reform agenda. Therefore, water intensive industry can lengthen the political problems of imposing costs in the short-term for mayors, lowering the costs to consumers before the long-term benefits of service improvements appear. Finally, state governments can provide legal, fiscal and technical resources that can help shorten the learning curve of incoming mayoral administrations. As such, state government can shorten the long-term planning of the reform process to make it more consistent with the shorter electoral cycle found at the municipal level. This research advances debates on policy adoption and implementation, highlighting the importance of political-business coalitional support as well as the role of inter-tier relations in maintaining policies over time.

For effective program evaluation, it is necessary to specify a counterfactual state, i.e., what would have happened without the program. Conventional approaches to program evaluation, preoccupied with technical and value issues, fail to address directly the need for counterfactual arguments. They also fail to recognize the indispensable role of positive theories of technical and behavioral processes in making these arguments. In order to understand the impact of the General Revenue Sharing (GRS) program on the fiscal behavior of municipal governments, Patrick Larkey develops and demonstrates an unconventional approach to program evaluation that overcomes these

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failures. Drawing on the positive theories of budgetary decisionmaking processes as well as longitudinal revenue and expenditure data from primary sources, the author specifies, estimates, and tests four "bureaucratic process" models for each of five city governments receiving GRS funds. Using these models to generate complex, counterfactual hypotheses, he then compares the counterfactual patterns with observed patterns to understand the fiscal effects of GRS. Originally published in 1979. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

This Handbook provides a comprehensive overview of local governance in China, and offers original analysis of key factors underpinning trends in this field drawing on the expertise of scholars both inside and outside China. It explores and analyzes the dynamic interaction and collaboration among multiple governmental and non-governmental actors and social sectors with an interest in the conduct of public affairs to address horizontal challenges faced by the local government, society, economy, and civil community and considers key issues such as governance in urban and rural areas, the impact of technology on governance and related issues of education, healthcare, environment and energy. As the result of a global and interdisciplinary collaboration of leading experts, this Handbook offers a cutting-edge insight into the characteristics, challenges and trends of local governance and emphasizes the promotion of good governance and democratic development in China.

Excerpt from *The Study City Government: An Outline of the Problems of Municipal Functions, Control and Organization* The problem of the city is so intense and so unlimited that every intelligent citizen who has given no attention to municipal problems owes an apology to his country and to his race. And the student who aspires to be a scholar can devote himself to no richer or inspiring field than the modern city, its government, its institutions, and its tendencies. As government is the most inclusive organization of men for the attainment of common ends, the problem of the city should be approached from its political and legal sides. If this outline of problems shall serve to suggest to the student the possibilities of the study of city government and of the general city problem, and shall be of any value to him as a guide in his further work, the publication of this volume will have been worth while. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes hundreds of thousands of rare and classic books. Find more at [www.forgottenbooks.com](http://www.forgottenbooks.com) This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. Forgotten Books uses state-of-the-art technology to digitally reconstruct the work, preserving the original format whilst repairing imperfections present in the aged copy. In rare cases, an imperfection in the original, such as a blemish or missing page, may be replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.

Providing a safe driving environment and implementing safety improvements at the local level can pose significant challenges for municipal governments. Similar to challenges faced by federal and state agencies, financial and personnel limitation can make it difficult for local agencies to develop and implement safety initiatives. Information is available to help local governments identify options and develop action plans for implementing safety measures. The purpose of this Traffic Safety Toolbox is to provide a resource of information for municipal practitioners. Specifically, the series of fact sheets provide guidance and information regarding selected traffic safety and engineering topics. These fact sheets provide information about valuable resources, including links to web pages as applicable. The fact sheets are presented in

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this Final Report and are available online at [www.mass.gov/mhd/safetytoolbox](http://www.mass.gov/mhd/safetytoolbox).

Abstract: Since South Africa held its first democratic elections in 1994, it has given significant attention to building an effective system of decentralization including provincial and local government. While provincial governments are responsible mainly for the implementation of social services such as health and education, the provision of much of the urban infrastructure is the responsibility of local government. Although many challenges remain, the country has made significant progress over the past decade in addressing urban service backlogs in poor areas. At the same time, it has greatly improved macroeconomic fundamentals. The system of financing local government seeks to place accountability firmly at the local level, with most revenues in the larger urban centers raised locally through a combination of local taxes and fees for services, while poorer regions are predominantly grant funded. The objective has been to encourage the financing of capital infrastructure through local borrowing based on sustainable, transparent local finances rather than national repayment guarantees, which are outlawed. There is some indirect subsidization of loans through the state-owned Development Bank of Southern Africa. But the emphasis is on achieving redistribution through transparent, formula-based grants paid directly from national to local governments. While further bedding down of the system is needed, the approach is proving largely successful. The paper concludes by recommending that the existing division between provinces as providers of social services and local governments as the key locus of responsibility for services related to the built environment should be strengthened, particularly through the devolution of more urban transport related functions. A number of key risks are also highlighted, including issues related to the reform of local business taxes.

Municipalities in Mozambique were established by law in 1997 and elected in 1998 for the first time, only a few years after the peace agreement. Most inherited archaic and dysfunctional remnants of colonial and central government systems and infrastructure, and as such limited progress was achieved in transforming them into functioning local governments during the first mandate (1998-2002). During the second mandate (2003-2008), however, significant improvements were seen as municipalities began to grasp the nettle of local governance and some service delivery challenges. By the end of their first decade most municipalities have reorganized themselves to some extent and a number have undertaken initiatives that are beginning to bear fruit. There remains a long way to go, however, before municipalities will be robust enough to deliver quality local services to meet growing demand. There is a danger that the pace of municipal technical and financial capacity development will be overtaken by the growing municipal population and by transfers of additional mandates. Municipalities, central government, and the Association of Municipalities (ANAMM) need to support municipalities to perform their potentially significant role in improving living conditions, stimulating growth and cementing meaningful democracy in Mozambique. This study provides the first integrated assessment of the challenges of local development and service delivery through a municipal lens. It diagnoses the underlying systemic constraints facing municipalities, discusses some of the specific service delivery challenges of the municipalities, and it sets out recommendations for both central and municipal governments to tackle some of these constraints within an integrated and systemic framework.

Cities and towns are vital for the development of economic systems and social organisations. However, cities face tremendous challenges. They have to simultaneously attract business, provide a good livelihood for their inhabitants, generate enough resources to finance infrastructure and social needs, and take care of their poor. The Challenge of Urban Government: Policies and Practices looks at the consequences of globalisation on city management. This book focuses on the complex of issues generated in urban areas, such as the dynamics of metropolitan spaces, and the need to define strategic territory for operational and policy purposes. Some urgent challenges

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include how to handle spillovers across municipalities and the need to create a new city structure over an existing city to give the suburbs some elements of centrality. It examines the dynamics of governance and how to get stakeholders' participation in the government process. Following the financial crisis and subsequent impacts of economic slowdown and austerity, the emergence of new local governance models and innovation is a very timely issue. The same goes for identifying new types of funding schemes and fiscal models prompted by austerity with the reduction in financial resources for local governments. This book offers a broad perspective on some of the organizational and financial problems faced by cities and local governments across Europe and analyses the reactions and reforms implemented to address current economic and public finance conditions. The geographical coverage of the case studies, multidisciplinary background of the contributing authors and focus on a multiplicity of issues and challenges that confront local governments, not just financial issues as is often the case, means this book is relevant to a wide readership. The book is written for post-graduate students, advanced undergraduates, and researchers in the multidisciplinary field of local government studies (Public Administration, Geography, Political Science, Law, Economy and Sociology), as well as practitioners working in local government institutions.

Improving the relationship between archaeology and local government represents one of the next great challenges facing archaeology –specifically archaeology done in urban settings. Not only does local government have access to powerful legal tools and policy mechanisms that can offer protection for privately owned archaeological sites, but because local government exists at the grassroots level, it is also often closer to people who have deep knowledge about the community itself, about its values, and about the local meaning of the sites most in need of protection. This partnership between archaeology and local government can also provide visibility and public programming for heritage sites. This book will explore the experiences, both positive and negative, of small and large cities globally. We have examined programs in the Commonwealth of Nations (formerly known as the British Commonwealth) and in the United States. These countries share similar perspectives on preservation and heritage, although the approaches these cities have taken to address municipal archaeology reveals considerable diversity. The case studies highlight how these innovative partnerships have developed, and explain how they function within local government. Engaging with the political sphere to advocate for and conduct archaeology requires creativity, flexibility, and the ability to develop collaborative partnerships. How these archaeological partnerships benefit the community is a vital part of the equation. Heritage and tourist benefits are discussed. Economic challenges during downturns in the economy are analyzed. The book also examines public outreach programs and the grassroots efforts to protect and preserve a community's archaeological heritage.

Emerging Issues in State and Local Government Employment is an authoritative, insiders perspective on the strategic thinking needed to compete with the private sector for top talent and maintain high-level employees. Featuring state and municipal directors of personnel from across the country, this book provides a broad yet comprehensive overview of the unique challenges facing government departments of human resources as the Baby Boomer generation retires and skills deficiencies grow. These leaders articulate the importance of recruiting, retaining, and rewarding government employees by offering flexible work hours,

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technology improvements, competitive salaries and benefits, and opportunities for advancement. From approaching employment disputes to boosting morale during the current economic downturn, the authors share their advice for keeping the workplace a safe and positive environment for employees and preparing new generations to move into positions of leadership. The different niches represented and the breadth of perspectives presented enable readers to get inside some of the great minds in government today, as these experts reveal the secrets behind keeping government employment opportunities on the cutting edge.

The country study is based on the findings of several missions that visited Slovenia during the second half of 1997 and 1998. The report analyzes economic developments of the past few years and policy options linked to the challenges faced by Slovenia in its pursuit of European Union membership. The report is composed of two volumes. 'Volume I' is a summary report that condenses main findings and conclusions. The report focuses on: • elimination of the remaining structural weaknesses as means to maintain the macroeconomic stability; • increasing the competitiveness of the Slovene economy abroad; and • redefining the size and roles of the public and private sectors. 'Volume II' is the main report. It provides the assessment and technical analysis of selected key sectors of the Slovene economy. While each chapter is sector-specific in nature, the EU accession process dominates them.

'Volume II' covers the following issues: • Review of the economic performance during the transition • Analysis of the growth and income convergence issues • Study of the environment sector • Assessment of the foreign trade sector • Challenges of the financial sector • Enterprise sector issues • Labor market and social policies • Agricultural sector • Municipal governments

Contributors provide insights into key themes impacting local governance in two federations with much in common historically, culturally, and politically: Australia and Canada. These essays examine changes in the Australian and Canadian systems through four thematic lenses: citizen participation in government systems, the restructuring and reform of local governments, the use of performance measures and management systems in the administration of local governments, and the relations of local governments within higher levels of governments.

Argentina's path to economic prosperity is through efficient, sustainable and economically thriving cities. Not only are cities a spatial concentration of people, but also they generate agglomeration economies by concentrating ideas, talent, and knowledge. Argentina is one of the most urbanized countries in Latin America, with 90 percent of Argentine people currently living in cities. Argentina's cities are geographically and economically diverse, and its largest urban area †“ Metropolitan Buenos Aires †“ is one of Latin America's urban giants. Argentine cities need to address three main challenges to leverage their economic potential. Argentina's current patterns of urban development are characterized by (a) high primacy and unbalanced regional development, (b) limited global economic footprint of urban economies, with employment concentrated in nontradable and resource intensive sectors, and (c) unplanned low-density urban expansion. Argentine cities thus face the challenges of moving toward a more balanced regional development, transitioning from local to global cities, and from urban sprawl to articulated densities to take full advantage of the benefits of agglomeration economies. To address these challenges, Argentina needs the leadership of the federal government; the coordinating power of provinces; and the capacity of empowered, financially sound municipalities.

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Argentine cities also need system-wide policy reforms in areas such as territorial planning, municipal finance, housing, urban transport, and local economic development. Leveraging the Potential of Argentine Cities: A Framework for Policy Action aims to deepen our empirical understanding of the interplay between urbanization and agglomeration economies in Argentina by asking the following: (a) What are the main trends and spatial patterns of Argentina's urbanization that underlie agglomeration economies?, (b) Are urban policies leveraging or undermining the benefits of agglomeration economies?, and (c) Are Argentine cities fully reaping the benefits of agglomeration economies to deliver improvements in prosperity and livability? By addressing such questions and exploring their implications for action, this study provides a conceptual framework, empirical data, and strategic directions for leveraging the potential of Argentine cities.

Solid waste management (SWM) is a vital responsibility of municipal governments worldwide and is one of the biggest challenges faced by urban authorities. Waste generation is increasing at a rapid pace, exceeding the financial and technical capacities of local governments to collect, treat, and dispose of this waste. In the South Asia region, India, Nepal, and Pakistan share one common geographic characteristic - the high peaks of the Himalayan mountain range. This unique mountain ecology presents an opportunity for these economies to leverage this natural asset for economic growth. The aim of this report is to showcase SWM practices: (1) currently underway in India, Nepal, and Pakistan that can be scaled-up and adopted across mountain communities, and (2) operational in other countries or in other sectors that can be applied to this region. In this way, mountain communities can learn of, and be inspired to adopt, innovations that can greatly improve service delivery and resource efficiency. Chapter one gives introduction. Chapter two provides an overview and synthesis of the good practice options presented in this report. The good practices are presented as individual chapters from chapters 3 to 22.

The book was written for three different purposes: (i) better understand the types of powers assigned to municipalities to this day, (ii) better understand the increasingly important role played by municipalities in forest management, (iii) analyze the opportunities that were created and the challenges faced by the decentralization processes in the region. The book compiles findings from in-depth studies conducted in 6 countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. It uncovers some significant forest management schemes initiated by municipalities on the regional, na.

Perspectives on Management Capacity Building provides a lively spectrum of views on the problems and prospects of improving the management and performance of municipal governments in the United States. Leading specialists in public administration probe the management needs of local governments and explore ways in which they can improve their capacity to manage. Today, state and local governments are caught in the transition between the expansionism of the post-World War II years and the retrenchment era of the late seventies and eighties. Improved management capacity has emerged as the most effective way for local governments to ride out the economic and political pressures confronting them. This book first investigates the meaning of the term "management capacity." It then considers how management needs have changed in the post-war period and how these needs vary among large cities, suburbs, and rural communities. Two of the contributions explore the organizational politics of

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management improvement while others look at the functional areas of computers and financial management. The book also addresses human resource problems such as labor relations, management development, and training of municipal legislators, and concludes with several viewpoints on federal efforts to improve local management capacity.

Fiscal health of local governments and municipalities has remained an important issue since the crises of the 1970s in places like New York, Philadelphia and Cleveland. More recently, the bankruptcy of Orange County California raised the possibility of a different type of financial failure than earlier ones. The beginning of the 21st century has witnessed two major economic bubbles including the dotcom and housing bubbles. These economic cycles combined with increasing health care, pension and other structural costs continue to challenge the fiscal viability of many jurisdictions. In particular, the economic and financial crisis of 2007-2008 is likely to result in potentially serious fiscal challenges for local jurisdictions.

After 21 years of military rule, Brazil returned to democracy in 1985. Over the past decade and a half, Brazilians in the Nova República (New Republic) have struggled with a range of diverse challenges that have tested the durability and quality of the young democracy. How well have they succeeded? To what extent can we say that Brazilian democracy has consolidated? What actors, institutions, and processes have emerged as most salient over the past 15 years? Although Brazil is Latin America's largest country, the world's third largest democracy, and a country with a population and GNP larger than Yeltsin's Russia, more than a decade has passed since the last collaborative effort to examine regime change in Brazil, and no work in English has yet provided a comprehensive appraisal of Brazilian democracy in the period since 1985. *Democratic Brazil* analyzes Brazilian democracy in a comprehensive, systematic fashion, covering the full period of the New Republic from Presidents Sarney to Cardoso. *Democratic Brazil* brings together twelve top scholars, the "next generation of Brazilianists," with wide-ranging specialties including institutional analysis, state autonomy, federalism and decentralization, economic management and business-state relations, the military, the Catholic Church and the new religious pluralism, social movements, the left, regional integration, demographic change, and human rights and the rule of law. Each chapter focuses on a crucial process or actor in the New Republic, with emphasis on its relationship to democratic consolidation. The volume also contains a comprehensive bibliography on Brazilian politics and society since 1985. Prominent Brazilian historian Thomas Skidmore has contributed a foreword to the volume. *Democratic Brazil* speaks to a wide audience, including Brazilianists, Latin Americanists generally, students of comparative democratization, as well as specialists within the various thematic subfields represented by the contributors. Written in a clear, accessible style, the book is ideally suited for use in upper-level undergraduate courses and graduate seminars on Latin American politics and development.

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