

The Commission has endeavored to direct its work so as to provide a sustained program of research, attention to political realities as well as technical factors, and an application of research findings to point the way toward concerted intergovernmental action in metropolitan areas.

The Commission's reports on metropolitan problems have ranged over such issues as government structure and organization, the performance of specific urban functions, alternative approaches to governmental reorganization in metropolitan areas, the impact of Federal urban development programs, metropolitan social and economic disparities, intergovernmental responsibilities for water supply and sewage disposal, and the complexities of relocating people and businesses displaced by government action. This book is based on the series of Commission studies in order to present both an analysis of the subjects they cover and the program for improvement proposed by the Commission. Taken together, the separate analyses constitute a diagnosis of the state of metropolitan America and its governmental capabilities. In addition, the specific proposals furnish the basis for a workable philosophy of intergovernmental relations in an urban age, and for a unified program of needed Federal, State, and local action on metropolitan area problems.

URBAN GROWTH AND SERVICES

The rapid pace of metropolitan expansion poses one significant set of challenges to local government. The great majority of people and economic activities in the United States are now concentrated in over 200 metropolitan areas, and virtually all future growth is expected to take place within these areas. Inside metropolitan areas, however, growth does not take a concentrated form but tends to spread well beyond the established cities into fringe territory. By now, more than half the metropolitan population lives outside the central cities. This pattern of growth imposes major new service demands on local governments in outlying areas, many of which have never before had to cope with the pressures of sudden population increase.

President Johnson outlined the national magnitude of the urban growth challenge in his 1965 message to Congress on the cities:

Our new city dwellers will need homes and schools and public services. By 1975, we will need over 2 million new homes a year. We will need schools for 10 million additional children, welfare and health facilities for 5 million more people over the age of 60, transportation facilities for the daily movement of 200 million people, and more than 80 million automobiles.

In the remainder of this century—in less than 40 years—urban population will double, city land will double, and we will have to build in our cities as much as all that we have built since the first colonist arrived on these shores. It is as if we had 40 years to rebuild the entire urban United States.

Urban growth is a complex process requiring a wide variety of public and private resources. The expansive pattern of urban development in the United States means, first, that a large supply of land is needed to accommodate increases in population and economic activity. In fact, the need for urban land tends to grow at a faster rate than population increase. In the New York metropolitan region—defined broadly to include several contiguous metropolitan areas in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut—the population is expected to grow from 16 million in 1960 to 22 million in 1985. If