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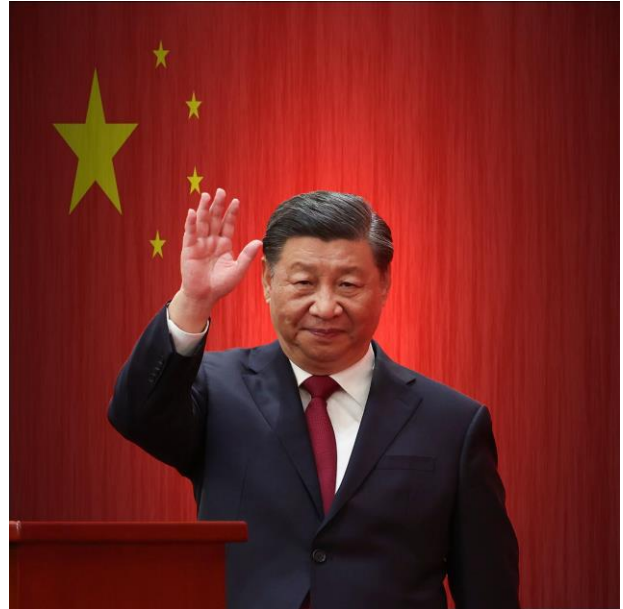
China Leads in Modernizing Urban Governance for a Better Future



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Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Chinese President Xi Jinping has championed a series of transformative strategies to modernize urban governance, particularly in large cities. His vision centers on creating a new type of urbanization that prioritizes people’s well-being. Statements like “accelerating the development of a new type of urbanization that puts people at the core”



and “urban governance being an important part of accelerating the modernization of China’s system and capacity for governance” reflect a coherent, logical framework for governing urban spaces. Guided by this theoretical system, cities like Beijing have successfully redefined their urban governance models, aligning them with public aspirations for a better quality of life.

In 2019, Beijing took a significant step toward improving public services by upgrading its 12345 hotline—a government service platform connecting individuals and businesses with administrative services. This initiative also introduced a rapid-response mechanism to address public appeals. The city has pioneered a shift toward a more service-oriented and collaborative governance model in a megacity context.

Key advancements include the integration of urban planning, construction, and management. Beijing has embraced full-cycle management in urban governance by



conducting "health check-ups" for urban planning and management processes. This approach ensures that challenges identified during management are promptly addressed in planning and construction, creating a systematic and closed-loop governance model. Following principles of "small-scale, gradual, and sustainable" development, Beijing has implemented high-quality urban renewal projects. These initiatives range from preserving historical heritage to transforming industrial dynamics and upgrading public services. The city aims to establish a sustainable, market-driven mechanism that reconstructs urban value and enhances functionality by revitalizing ageing residential areas, inefficient buildings, and industrial parks.

Innovative Community Governance Beijing has built a robust community governance framework centered on community-level Party organizations. This structure integrates residents' committees, service stations, social organizations, and local stakeholders, fostering collaboration and inclusivity. Mechanisms like community deliberation and consultation have enabled public participation and resource allocation, addressing the "last 100 meters" of community governance effectively.

The leadership has undertaken significant reforms to modernize its governance system, ensuring a robust institutional framework for economic and social development. These reforms emphasize high-quality economic growth, supply-side structural adjustments, and high-level opening up, enabling systemic integration and reshaping across various sectors. Stable employment, reliable social security, and equitable access to public services are key pillars of this approach. Recent efforts include improving income

distribution systems, strengthening social security frameworks, and balancing public service delivery to promote common prosperity.

People-Centric Urban Governance

The government has ensured open channels for public participation, fostering co-governance and shared responsibility. By clarifying departmental responsibilities and financial powers through governance checklists, the city has strengthened grassroots organizations and encouraged



widespread public involvement. This inclusive approach ensures that urban governance benefits all citizens, creating a model where everyone participates and enjoys shared outcomes.

Over the past five years, Beijing's reforms have significantly enhanced its ability to address citizen demands swiftly and effectively. This people-centered approach exemplifies the practical application of modern urban governance theories. The city's success provides a vivid demonstration of how large cities can balance development and public service delivery in a rapidly urbanizing world.



As rural infrastructure and living standards improve, the bidirectional movement of labour between urban and rural areas is reshaping urbanization patterns. Enhanced rural industrial growth and digital technologies, particularly e-commerce, are creating employment opportunities within local communities, reducing reliance on urban migration. Stabilizing the Real Estate Market Cities like Chengdu and Zibo have introduced policies to boost housing demand and streamline transactions. Measures such as lifting resale restrictions, increasing mortgage limits, and offering incentives like free parking aim to stabilize the property market and support basic housing needs. These efforts align with broader strategies to sustain economic recovery and ensure housing accessibility.

The integration of digital technology into governance has proven transformative. Digital technology plays a pivotal role in modernizing urban governance. From enhancing public service efficiency to supporting employment through e-commerce, digitalization has become integral to China's development strategy. Chinese cities are enhancing decision-making, improving public service delivery, and optimising resource allocation by harnessing big data, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing. Digital tools also enable more precise management of urban challenges, from traffic congestion to environmental sustainability, ensuring cities remain livable and efficient.

China's journey toward modernization is deeply rooted in reform and innovation. On this path, it is essential to align governance reforms with economic and social development and enhance public participation in decision-making processes. By continuously adapting



governance systems to meet evolving challenges, China can ensure sustainable urbanization and high-quality growth. The focus on building a high-level socialist market economy, prioritizing citizens' well-being, and leveraging digital technologies positions China as a global leader in urban governance.

China's modernization of urban governance exemplifies its commitment to creating sustainable, inclusive, and people-centered cities. From innovative community frameworks in Beijing to nationwide reforms addressing housing, employment, and digitalization, the country is paving the way for a better urban future. As China continues its journey toward comprehensive modernisation, its urban governance model offers valuable lessons for cities worldwide striving to balance growth, sustainability, and citizen well-being.