



Book Reviews

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA • FROM CURRITUCK TO CALABASH • MEGATRENDS



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA

edited by David M. Lawrence and Warren J. Wicker
UNC - Chapel Hill
Institute of Government, 1982.

CAROL SHAW

What is the most prevalent form of municipal government in North Carolina? Which North Carolina statute allows cities to budget and expend revenues? Must municipal budgets be balanced? Can cities levy property taxes for mass transit or public housing? The answers to these and other questions can be easily found in Municipal Government in North Carolina. The book is edited by David M. Lawrence and Warren J. Wicker, professors of Public Law and Government at the Institute of Government, and it is intended to be a reference guide to North Carolina city government. In addition, it offers a framework for administrative organization of cities and towns.

Twenty-three chapters written by Institute of Government faculty and other experts make Municipal Government in North Carolina a complete reference guide to city government in this state. The book discusses every aspect of municipal government, including such topics as fiscal control and cash management, property taxation, community development, and planning. None of the essays are intended to be the final word on any subject. For example, the property tax takes fifty pages and should meet the needs of most government officials. But a city attorney or a tax collector will need more information, and the editors fulfill these more specific needs by recommending additional publications as warranted. Since municipalities and counties often work together, an appendix that briefly describes North Carolina county government is also included.

Municipal Government in North Carolina is designed primarily to meet the needs of elected officials and key administrators, but it will be particularly useful for city and county planners. In fact, this valuable reference guide belongs on the bookshelf of every North Carolina planner. Students interested in the inner workings of city government will also find the book extremely useful.



FROM CURRITUCK TO CALABASH: LIVING WITH NORTH CAROLINA'S BARRIER ISLANDS (2nd EDITION)

Orrin H. Pilkey, Jr.,
William I. Neal, Orrin H. Pilkey, Sr.,
and Stanley R. Riggs
Duke University Press, 1982.

JOSEPH W. McLELLAND

In recent years, the North Carolina coastline has undergone massive development. Higher incomes, more leisure, and the absence of major hurricanes have led to widespread, often dangerous construction. The authors of From Currituck to Calabash seek to provide a guide for "proper, limited development" of the North Carolina barrier islands. This volume is the first of a series entitled Living with the Shore, which will eventually provide guidance to development of the shorelines of all states bordering the oceans and Great Lakes.

The opening sections give a brief lesson in shoreline dynamics accompanied by illustrative diagrams and photographs. Man's attempts to prevent erosion have resulted in various projects such as jetties, groins, and sand replenishment. The long-range effect of these projects is always opposite the intention, and the battered shoreline of New Jersey is vivid proof. The islands are designed to retreat as well as occasionally overwash, processes that pose no problem until a permanent structure is built.

Because barrier islands are so volatile and unsuitable for construction, some guidance is needed to direct the inevitable development to less dangerous sites. What to look for; what to avoid, both natural and man-made; and what not to destroy are all described generally. This is followed by an island-by-island analysis of the North Carolina coast listing "safe", "caution", and "danger" zones which refer to problems or characteristics unique to each location. The text is accompanied by clear fold-out maps for each segment of island. These sections of the book are essential for anyone considering the purchase of a lot, house, condominium, or mobile home on the North Carolina coast.

A section on coastal law, a subject guide to relevant public agencies, and a subject bibliography of 101 references provide the interested reader access to information delving far

deeper into issues of coastal development. Throughout the text, references are made to entries in the bibliography.

This second edition of From Currituck to Calabash gives expanded treatment of the Outer Banks, especially Dare County. The rather brief treatment of this fast-growing region was a weakness of the first edition.

From Currituck to Calabash is well written, reads quickly, and is very easy to understand. Maps, photographs, and diagrams are carefully placed and helpful. The book's value is primarily to prospective property owners on the coast, but the clear explanation of shoreline dynamics and the extensive coverage of the areas can help anyone interested in the development or preservation of the North Carolina coast.



CHRIS BISHOP
MEGATRENDS
TEN NEW DIRECTIONS
TRANSFORMING OUR LIVES

John Naisbitt
Warner Books, 1982.

City planners constantly search for new information which will help them anticipate and influence the future. Megatrends, written by John Naisbitt, features ten national social trends that are changing American life.

Based upon the premise that the most reliable way to predict the future is to understand the present, Naisbitt and his colleagues studied the United States by reading its local newspapers over a period of twelve years. Naisbitt argues that this content analysis approach is the most effective way to monitor social change because newspapers must print the most current issues and omit the older ones.

The ten trends which were identified are as follows:

1. Industrial Society to Informational Society
Naisbitt sees this shift to be as major as the shift from an agricultural to an industrial society. Within the past thirty years, there has been a 40 percent increase in those employed in such informational jobs as teachers, lawyers, bankers and technicians.
2. Forced Technology to High Tech/High Touch
The return to home births and folkcrafts is a response to the need for a balance between technological and spiritual needs.
3. National Economy to World Economy
The United States is no longer the dominant country in the world economy. Naisbitt recommends that we pursue the newer technologies of electronics and biotechnology

and allow the emerging third world countries to assume our former industrial role.

4. Short Term to Long Term
Lessons from Japanese management are encouraging American corporations to focus on long-term planning instead of short-term profits.
5. Centralization to Decentralization
As residents continue to migrate to non-urban areas, political power is becoming more decentralized. There is a marked increase in the power of state government and in regional concerns.
6. Institutional Help to Self Help
Americans suffer from a great mistrust of institutions which have disillusioned them in the past. As a result, they are turning away from the government, corporations, and the medical profession and are relying on their own initiative.
7. Representative Democracy to Participatory Democracy
Rather than allowing representatives to serve their constituent interests, Americans are initiating more local referendums and grassroots activity than ever before.
8. Hierarchies to Networking
Although we continue to believe in hierarchies as a means to structure our lives, they are quickly becoming incompatible with an informational, decentralized society. The new society works best in a network format which depends upon the sharing of ideas and resources.
9. North to South
While the shift in population and economic activity from northern to southern states is well known, Naisbitt stresses its importance. He cites the trend as a migration to Florida, Texas, and California. Naisbitt asserts that the trend is a manifestation of a national shift from an industrial to an informational society.
10. Either/Or to Multiple Choice Option
The amount of choice in our personal lives, employment opportunities, and even in foods is unprecedented.

Changes in our national and world economy are encouraging the development of new industries and technology and new lifestyles to complement them. Megatrends provides a framework for intelligent planning and decision-making at a macro level.

Carol Shaw and Chris Bishop are recent graduates of, and Joseph W. McLelland is a Master's candidate in planning at UNC-Chapel Hill.