

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Q:** Los Angeles County with its mountains, deserts, cities, beaches and a population of 10 million is extremely difficult to govern: How is it done today and can it be done better?

Scholars recognize that the story of the development of the Los Angeles metropolitan area is unique in the United States. Although seemingly confined to one county in one state, the area was vast and the initial development was uneven. Later, the widely separated developments grew quickly and led to the creation of multiple governments in LA County, with the City of Los Angeles representing just one of 88 cities in the County.

Recognizing the urgent need for relevant information about the duplication of service and waste of resources, the Haynes Foundation initiated and supported a comprehensive investigation (16 separate volumes) of the structure and functions of local government. These 16 volumes addressed topics like law enforcement, sanitation and health, fire protection, highways, water supply, recreation and parks, personnel administration, governmental purchasing, schools, libraries, finance and taxation, intergovernmental relations, and metropolitan integration.

While these sixteen volumes provide an introduction and guidelines for effective governance for a 20th Century Los Angeles, they include insights that remain relevant to 21st Century Los Angeles.

## CITATION

*Author:*  
Cottrell, Edwin A.

*Title:*  
*Characteristics of the Metropolis*

*Year:* 1952

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