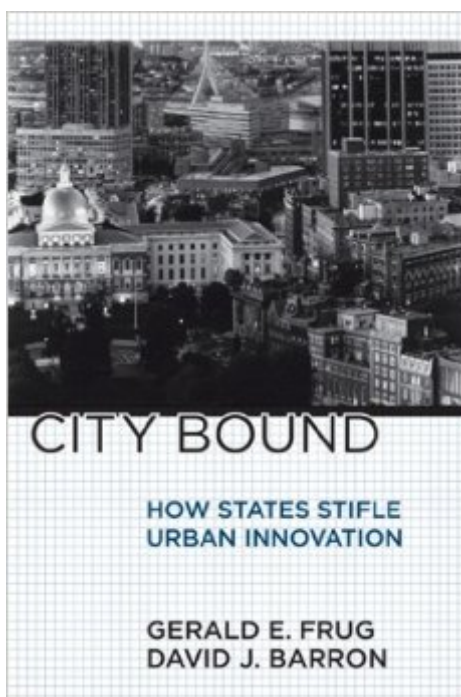


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# City Bound: How States Stifle Urban Innovation



## Synopsis

Many major American cities are defying the conventional wisdom that suburbs are the communities of the future. But as these urban centers prosper, they increasingly confront significant constraints. In *City Bound*, Gerald E. Frug and David J. Barron address these limits in a new way. Based on a study of the differing legal structures of Boston, New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, and Seattle, *City Bound* explores how state law determines what cities can and cannot do to raise revenue, control land use, and improve city schools. Frug and Barron show that state law can make it much easier for cities to pursue a global-city or a tourist-city agenda than to respond to the needs of middle-class residents or to pursue regional alliances. But they also explain that state law is often so outdated, and so rooted in an unjustified distrust of local decision making, that the legal process makes it hard for successful cities to develop and implement any coherent vision of their future. Their book calls not for local autonomy but for a new structure of state-local relations that would enable cities to take the lead in charting the future course of urban development. It should be of interest to everyone who cares about the future of American cities, whether political scientists, planners, architects, lawyers, or simply citizens.

## Book Information

File Size: 909 KB

Print Length: 292 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0801445140

Publisher: Cornell University Press; 1 edition (July 2, 2013)

Publication Date: July 2, 2013

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00DQMWRSW

Text-to-Speech: Not enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #753,929 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #28

inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Law > Administrative Law > Urban, State & Local Government

#134 inÂ Books > Law > Administrative Law > Urban, State & Local Government #154 inÂ Kindle

Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > United States > State & Local Government

## Customer Reviews

A great overview of the ways in which cities' abilities to innovate are hampered by legal and tax structures dictated at the state or provincial level. Want to change things in cities? You need to have these constraints in mind. Slightly dated in places, but (un)fortunately, not much has changed since the book was written, so still very useful.

It's an important book, especially if you have an interest in local government law. But you can get the "point" of it just from its subtitle, that point being that state governments often prevent cities from doing beneficial things. I didn't know that before I read the book, admittedly, but I don't know if I needed 280 pages to tell me it.

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