



PART 3

Read the text below and answer questions 27–40.

MEGACITIES AND THE CHALLENGE OF SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

A Megacities are routinely described as “large cities,” yet such a label conceals their more consequential character: they function as complex adaptive systems whose behaviour emerges from dense interdependencies rather than from any single sectoral plan. When populations exceed ten million, the urban fabric becomes a tightly coupled assemblage of housing markets, labour flows, transport networks, energy grids, water cycles, waste streams, and public health regimes. Interventions in one domain are therefore rarely isolated; they propagate across the system through feedback loops, time lags, and distributional effects. In such contexts, governance is less a matter of issuing policies than of managing the unintended consequences produced when interconnected subsystems are pushed beyond capacity. The resulting dilemma is structural: the very agglomeration that generates productivity and specialised services also amplifies congestion, inequality, and exposure to climate hazards, meaning that “success” and “risk” are co-produced by the same urban mechanisms.

B The capacity to govern these interdependencies is frequently undermined by fragmentation, a condition that can be conceptualised as jurisdictional mismatch between functional urban systems and administrative boundaries. Megacities commonly incorporate multiple municipalities, semi-autonomous agencies, private utilities, and special-purpose authorities whose mandates overlap but do not align. Transport planning may be conducted independently of land-use zoning; drainage may be designed without reference to housing densification; health systems may be expected to respond to crises whose drivers sit in environmental or labour policy. This silo effect produces not only duplication and policy gaps but also delayed response when emergencies demand coordinated action across borders that are bureaucratic rather than ecological. When a flood, heatwave, or epidemic escalates, the question is not merely what should be done, but which institution has the authority, data access, and budget to act—while the hazard ignores municipal lines.

C What is feasible is further conditioned by finance, and financing is never neutral. Megacities require long-horizon investment in transit corridors, drainage retrofits, affordable housing, and distributed energy, yet revenue capacity is often uneven across districts and politically constrained at the metropolitan scale. Where property values are concentrated in central zones, tax bases can be spatially skewed, and where informal settlements dominate, large populations may fall outside formal revenue systems despite



acute service needs. Debt instruments and land-value capture can expand fiscal space, but their benefits and burdens are distributed unevenly and can intensify exclusion if repayment relies on regressive fees. Public–private partnerships (PPPs) are frequently advanced as a pragmatic solution for mobilising capital and expertise; however, the governance literature has repeatedly noted that PPPs can generate accountability deficits when contracts are opaque, risk is socialised, and essential services become more expensive for households least able to pay. Thus, funding choices create both opportunity and risk: the same financial architecture that accelerates infrastructure delivery can embed long-term affordability problems and weaken democratic oversight.

D Technological solutions are increasingly presented as a substitute for institutional capacity, a move consistent with technocratic governance traditions. Smart sensors, predictive analytics, digital payments, and real-time dashboards can indeed increase operational efficiency by identifying leaks, optimising bus frequencies, or detecting equipment failure before breakdown occurs. Yet the deployment of “smart city” tools is also socially selective: benefits may accrue first to connected districts with reliable coverage and political influence, while marginal areas experience little improvement or face new burdens. Moreover, datafication raises privacy concerns when surveillance expands without oversight, especially in contexts where legal protections are weak or where data is shared across agencies and vendors. The crucial issue is not whether data can be collected—at megacity scale it inevitably will be—but whether transparency exists regarding what is gathered, how it is used, and who can contest errors or misuse. Without such safeguards, efficiency gains may be purchased at the cost of legitimacy and equity.

E Climate risk functions as the defining stress test because it targets multiple subsystems simultaneously and exposes the limits of incremental adaptation. Many megacities face compound hazards: heatwaves intensified by the urban heat island effect; flooding driven by extreme rainfall, sea-level rise, and inadequate drainage; drought that constrains water supply; and coastal storms that disrupt energy and transport. These hazards are often worsened by land subsidence, the sealing of soils, and the loss of wetlands that once absorbed water. Resilience planning typically includes drainage upgrades, protective barriers, cooling strategies, and early-warning systems, yet the most contested decisions involve land and exposure. A “defend” strategy seeks to fortify existing development, while a “retreat” strategy restricts construction in floodplains, relocates vulnerable communities, or redesigns zoning to reduce future risk. These choices are politically explosive because they translate climate science into distributional outcomes: who must move, who receives protection, and whose property rights are constrained.



F Social equity is not an ethical add-on but an operational precondition for sustainability, because policies that ignore distributional realities often fail through backlash.

Environmental measures such as congestion charging, fuel price reform, or strict emissions controls may reduce pollution and carbon output, yet they can be perceived as regressive if low-income workers lack viable alternatives in transport or housing. When daily survival depends on informal employment, long commutes, or precarious shelter, a technically rational reform can be experienced as punitive. Consequently, inclusive governance requires compensatory design: targeted rebates, improved public transport, phased implementation, and participatory mechanisms that give affected communities meaningful influence. Without such provisions, enforcement becomes politically costly and compliance deteriorates, undermining the policy's stated environmental goals.

G The megacity's metabolism—its flows of food, water, materials, and waste—reveals dependence on hinterlands that are often governed by separate jurisdictions with different incentives. Cities import vast quantities of food and construction inputs and export waste to landfills, incinerators, or informal recycling networks that may sit far beyond municipal borders. Attempts to create circular economy systems—composting, reuse markets, industrial symbiosis, and repair infrastructures—can reduce pressure on landfills and supply chains, but only if coordination extends across the region and incentives reshape production and consumption upstream. If waste is treated as an afterthought, circularity becomes a slogan; if it is treated as a supply-chain redesign problem, it demands new regulatory alignments, cross-border agreements, and stable markets for secondary materials. Thus, sustainability is partly determined by governance beyond the city itself.

H Because the benefits and burdens of policy are uneven, accountability becomes central: trust is the scarce resource that determines whether plans survive contact with politics. Large-scale coordination can be achieved through metropolitan authorities that set standards and integrate transport and housing, but such bodies must be coupled with local flexibility to adapt policies to neighbourhood realities. Transparency mechanisms—open budgets, performance audits, and accessible citizen feedback channels—help make trade-offs visible and enable corrective action when projects drift or corruption emerges. In the absence of such mechanisms, even technically sound plans can fail, not because the engineering is wrong, but because legitimacy collapses and enforcement becomes contested. Governance, in this view, is a continual process of justification and revision rather than a one-time institutional design.

I Ultimately, sustainable governance in megacities is a long-term negotiation between growth and limits, conducted under uncertainty and contested values. The most effective approaches resist sectoral separation: finance, infrastructure, equity, and climate



resilience are treated as linked issues rather than parallel agendas. A transit expansion, for instance, is simultaneously a mobility project, a housing strategy, a labour-market intervention, and a climate policy, and its success depends on whether institutional arrangements can manage these interactions. While certain principles—coordination, transparency, and inclusive design—appear repeatedly in comparative research, the passage does not claim that a single governance model fits every megacity. Instead, it implies that governance capacity must be assembled pragmatically, balancing metropolitan integration with local adaptation, and distributing benefits in ways that sustain legitimacy over decades of urban expansion.

Questions 27–31

Choose the correct heading for each paragraph.

List of Headings

- i The consequences of governing interconnected urban systems
- ii Administrative division as an obstacle to coordinated action
- iii How funding choices can create both opportunity and risk
- iv Using technology to manage services, with privacy and equity concerns
- v Climate pressures and difficult decisions about land and exposure
- vi The financial advantages of relying on private investment
- vii Technology as a replacement for institutional capacity
- viii Protecting all existing development from climate threats

27 Paragraph C

28 Paragraph A

29 Paragraph E

30 Paragraph B

31 Paragraph D

Questions 32–35

The text has nine paragraphs, **A–I**. Which paragraph contains the following information?
Choose the correct letter, **A–I**.



32 The passage suggests that the best long-term strategies treat finance, infrastructure, equity and climate resilience as linked issues.

33 Environmental measures can provoke opposition if poorer residents have limited alternatives.

34 Mechanisms for accountability and public trust can affect whether well-designed plans work in practice.

35 Circular economy policies depend on coordination and incentives that extend beyond the city itself.

Questions 36–40

Choose **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information given in the text, choose **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the information, or choose **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

36 The passage suggests that fragmented governance can delay responses during emergencies.

37 The passage states that public–private partnerships inevitably reduce the cost of essential services.

38 The passage claims that smart governance technologies deliver equal benefits to all parts of a megacity.

39 The passage suggests that limiting construction in flood-prone locations may form part of a resilience strategy.

40 The passage states that Tokyo’s governance model is the best example for all other megacities.

Answer Key

27. iii

28. i

29. v

30. ii

31. iv

32. I



33. F

34. H

35. G

36. TRUE

37. FALSE

38. FALSE

39. TRUE

40. NOT GIVEN