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Increasing concerns about global warming, soaring gas prices, and environmental degradation are triggering interest in sustainable development, and China is no exception. Through more than two decades of rapid economic growth, levels of urbanization in China has increased from 18 percent to 41 percent between 1978 and 2003, and it is expected to reach 65 percent by 2050. This rapid urbanization in China threatens to produce shortages of land resources, damage to the environment, and social inequity, all of which pose difficult challenges for China's sustainable future.

Acknowledging the problems of rapid urbanization in China, the Chinese government initiated a movement called "scientific outlook on development," which stresses the development of a harmonic society, with sustainable and balanced development as its basic requirement, and coordinated and comprehensive growth as its fundamental approach. Chinese scholars, policy makers, and planners are asking questions such as: Are smart growth doctrines developed elsewhere applicable in China? Are public policies effective in managing the problems associated with urbanization in China? Are the plans efficient as instruments in guiding toward more scientific growth?

To help address these issues, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy organized a conference on "Smart Urban Growth for China" in May 2007. It was the second in a series to understand the evolution of urbanization in China. Thirteen papers from the first conference were collected in the book *Urbanization in China: Critical Issues in an Era of Rapid Growth*, published by the Lincoln Institute in 2007.

This book presents various perspectives on shaping a sustainable urbanization in China based on conference discussions of the following questions: What lessons can China learn from other countries through their experiences in combating urban sprawl? What are the "dumb" growth patterns that are economically inefficient, environmentally unfriendly, or socially undesirable in Chinese cities? Finally, to what extent is China's fragmented planning system responsible for

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uncoordinated urban growth, and how might it be improved?

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About the Editors

Yan Song is assistant professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research interests include economics of land use regulations, growth management, and spatial analysis of urban form.

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