New-Book Release

Global Information Society: Technology, Knowledge, and Mobility

by

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CCED Contributions to the Book

Michigan State University's Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED), with support from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), has functioned as something of an incubator for this just-published new book. From 1999 to the present, Professors Mark I. Wilson and Kenneth E. Corey have participated in a long series of related, progressive EDA-funded projects, each of which involved the explicit awareness and strategic use of information and communications technologies and their various relationships with the people and organizations of Michigan's development-planning regions. This work began with measuring the digital divide and the roles of science and technology in enabling Michigan's development planning regions to engage the global knowledge economy. Knowledge Economy Index and indicators were developed by CCED's Knowledge Economy Research Team at various scales, i.e., counties and city-regions. Throughout these projects, and the more recent foreign direct investment and export-promotion work, the focus has been to ensure that these issues and approaches would be incorporated into Michigan planning regions' Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning. These CCED projects importantly informed the Corey and Wilson 2006 book, *Urban and Regional Technology Planning: Planning Practice in the Global Knowledge Economy.*

The intelligent development concept, translational research and practice, and the ALERT model were introduced in the 2006 book. These frameworks were tested further in the three most recent CCED EDA-supported projects: (1) the 2008-2010 CEDS to CIDS project, with "CIDS" standing for Comprehensive Intelligent Development Strategy; (2) the 2011-2013 Regional Export Promotion project; and (3) the five-year Regional Economic Innovation University Center project that began in 2011. Each of these inititiatives, in their planning and implementation, were on-going opportunities to refine, enhance and perfect the thinking and application of intelligent development, translational science and the ALERT model so that they might be framed more generically for use globally in regions beyond the Michigan context. As a result, recently, the 2013 book was published – *Global Information Society: Technology, Knowledge, and Mobility.* It, along with the 2006 book, *Urban and Regional Technology Planning: Planning Practice in the Global Knowledge Economy* form the foundation for disseminating and more widely activating regional intelligent development as an important development planning framework.

The Book

In this era of nearly ubiquitous information and the technologies and global networks to access and use that information, it is imperative that the individuals, organizations and institutions of society have the means to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the global information society. Knowledge and judgment are at the core of being able to mobilize and harness the development potential of information and communications technologies for enhanced regional development. This book seeks to address the aspirations and visions that are inherent in these dynamics.

The overarching goal of this book is to empower its readers to understand the complexities of today's networked global information society and to use that understanding to promote awareness and to be positioned to strategize for intelligent development of their local community.

The sequencing of the chapters takes an analysis-to-action tack. The first part of the book lays down the content foundation to understand the substance and nature of technology infrastructure, the mobility of these technologies and information, their knowledge-production capabilities, and the roles of individuals in information society. Part two of the book explicates the geography or spatial organization of the large-scale regions of the global economy. This analysis is innovative in that it reveals the complexities and unevenness of information and technologies across the world's regions of: Africa and the Middle East; the Asia-Pacific; Europe; and the Americas. Given the inter-connectedness and differential competitive advantages between these large regions of the globe, understanding these macro relationships is critical to strategizing locally so as to be positioned to take advantage of the development opportunities offered by information and its various technologies.

The last three chapters (i.e., parts three and four) of the book are intended to be useful to regional planners (at the sub-provincial/sub-state scale) and their stakeholders in their on-going work of future development planning and other thematic strategic planning efforts with citizen stakeholders, e.g., on such development issues as economic production, consumption, quality of life/amenities, and programmatic activities such as exporting strategic planning and other planning themes such as in infrastructure, geotourism, other services, etc.

The book was inspired by the authors' scholarly and practice work throughout the regions of the global society. This work has taken place in and included city-regions and rural-small town regions. In the rural regional planning work of the authors for the intelligent development of the far north of Michigan for example, the policies planning processes of parts three and four of the book have informed the development strategies and tactics for the activation of the understanding and awareness of the first two parts of the book. These action strategies and tactics were conceived from work with citizen planners and other civic volunteers to use, tailor locally and thereby complement the planning work of regional planning professionals.

The diverse range of readers who can benefit from the book is one of its principal contributions. The messages of the book speak to professionals and citizens alike. Local and regional development in today's global information society, at its best, is a team effort. It requires the input and talents of development professionals and other local-area interests; i.e., stakeholders who will be impacted by the planned development must have a voice in these processes and their envisioned outcomes. Regional stakeholders include business and labor, government at all levels, institutions such as in education at all levels, foundations, and individuals, among many others.

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