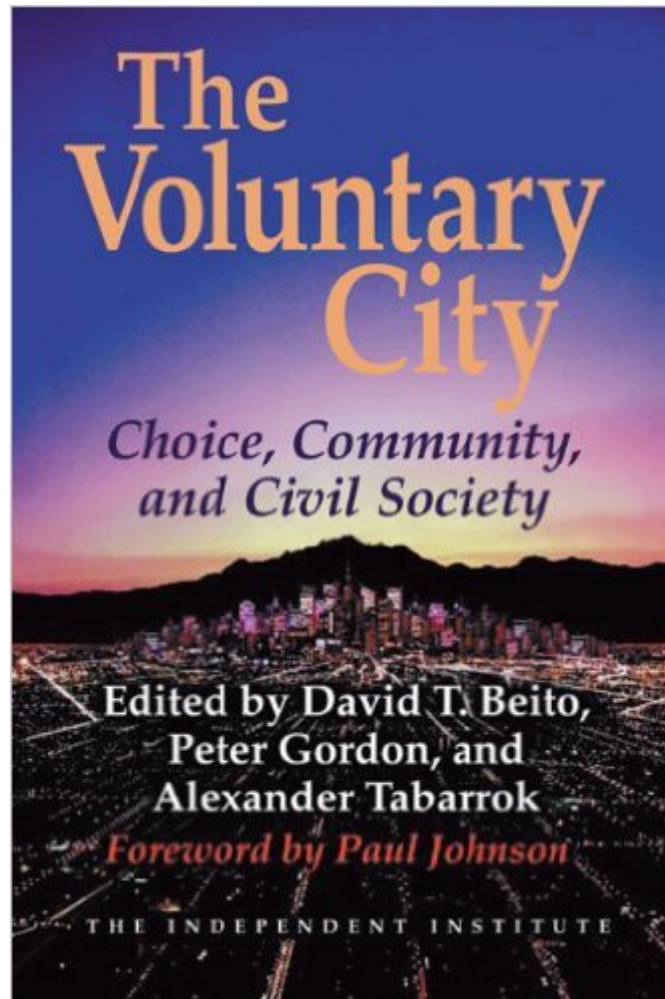


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# The Voluntary City: Choice, Community, And Civil Society



## Synopsis

Assembling a rich history and analysis of large-scale, private and voluntary, community-based provision of social services, urban infrastructure, and community governance, this book provides suggestions on how to restore the vitality of city life. Historically, the city was considered a center of commerce, knowledge, and culture, a haven for safety and a place of opportunity. Today, however, cities are widely viewed as centers for crime, homelessness, drug wars, business failure, impoverishment, transit gridlock, illiteracy, pollution, unemployment, and other social ills. In many cities, government increasingly dominates life, consuming vast resources to cater to special-interest groups. This book reveals how the process of providing local public goods through the dynamism of freely competitive, market-based entrepreneurship is unmatched in renewing communities and strengthening the bonds of civil society.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Back in the mid to late 90's I had the pleasure of reading a new version of a book written by David Friedman called "The Machinery of Freedom" which was originally published in the 1970's. Prior to this review I had the opportunity to read the libertarian classic "The Market for Freedom" written by Morris and Linda Tannehill was one of the first books to introduce the concepts of a voluntary society in print. While I am not sold on anarcho-capitalism, Friedman's book introduced me to anarcho-capitalist ideas and now, years later, thanks to David T. Beito and the Independent Institute, "The Voluntary City" is published that confirms many of the thoughts and ideas Friedman

and the Tanehills wrote about in their treatises. This book is a collection of policy pieces done by different authors that detail specific, present and past real-life examples of free market alternatives to things like court systems and litigation, education, police, housing and welfare. Most of whom were provided by insurance plans people purchased or services provided by private, charitable organizations people belonged to while governments, by and large, stayed out of the way. One aspect of the book that was not pointed out was private fire departments. Despite them being provided by municipalities, to this day most fire departments in the U.S. are staffed almost entirely by volunteers. Prior to being run by governments, many fire departments were privately provided in which their funding came from insurance plans they participated in that provided fire protection for their customers. It wasn't until after the civil war that municipalities started acquiring, starting and operating them.

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