

# **Putting People First for a Better Life Together**

## **—Report on Beijing's Reform for Swift Responses to Public Complaints Through Party Building**

Chinese Academy of Social Science

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Bringing benefit to the people is the fundamental aim of governance. As underlined by General Secretary Xi Jinping, we must strive to realize, safeguard, and advance the fundamental interests of all our people. To this end, we must do everything within our capacity to resolve the most practical problems that are of the greatest and most direct concern to the people. We should stay engaged with our people and their communities, adopt more measures that deliver real benefits to the people and win their approval, and work hard to resolve the pressing difficulties and problems that concern them most by improving the basic public services system.

Cities are a major vehicle for modernization. Urban governance is important to the modernization of the system and capacity of national governance. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasizes that the people are at the heart of a city, and the levels of satisfaction and convenience in the lives of the people are key indicators for measuring the success of urban governance. We should ensure that the general public remains the key consideration when carrying out urban construction and development, and explore the road of mega-city development with Chinese characteristics in a way which reflects the features of the times and the strengths of our socialist system.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), General Secretary Xi Jinping has offered a series of important instructions for Beijing's work in course of multiple inspection tours in Beijing. He profoundly expounded on the major issue of our times that is "what type of capital we ought to build how we should do it". Xi Jinping emphasized that Beijing should explore the construction of a mega-city governance system with a view to creating a city for the people, and therein build comprehensive response strategy, which is especially receptive to issues of the greatest concern to the people.

The whole of Beijing has acted resolutely in the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important instructions and series of speeches on development in Beijing and endeavored to adapt to the requirements of the new era. Over the past five years, in view of a series of "big city diseases" which have emerged in the process of urbanization, Beijing has persisted with a brand of

reform and innovation which is driven by public needs and the requirements of Party building, and taken solid steps to advance the reform for swift responses to public complaints, so as to meet the demands of the people in all respects. The city has made efforts to address challenges for urban governance, and pressed ahead with the capacity and modernization of the system of urban governance system. This project presents itself as the model for the governance of China by opening up a new road of mega-city governance.

The reform for swift responses to public complaints encompasses a raft of reforms and innovations made by the Beijing Municipal Government in order to realize our people-centered philosophy of development, which features unified leadership, overall planning, and coordinated progress. In the process of carrying out this reform, keeping the demands of the people firmly in mind, the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal Government have defined the responsibilities for the primary level of governance and ensured strict implementation. By incorporating the people-centered philosophy of development into various tasks, practical steps have been taken to deliver more benefits of modernization to all citizens in a more equitable way. The pillar of this energetic approach to governance practice is a hotline-leveraged revolution in urban governance that embodies Beijing's quintessential Chinese-style people-centered modernization, conducting in accordance with the requirements of Party building and in line with the law. Through unremitting exploration, Beijing has successfully established a complete leadership system and work mechanism for swift responses to public complaints, which relies on the citizen service hotline and its online platform to respond to every complaint relating to people's livelihoods. The resolution rate and satisfaction rate have increased from an initial 53% and 65%, to 94% and 95% respectively. The people's sense of fulfillment, happiness and security has been significantly enhanced. A new model of mega-city governance featuring swift responses to public complaints has thus become a reality, which speaks volumes for Beijing's outstanding commitment to realizing the people's aspirations for better lives. This project sets a vivid example for comprehensively deepening reforms in a problem-oriented manner and provides valuable experience for modernizing the system and capacity of national governance.

## **I. Launch and Process**

The reform of swift responses to public complaints derives from practice and advances through practice. It has gone through three stages: fast responses to community calls, swift responses to public complaints, and proactive governance. These three stages are consistent, interconnected and integrated into a complete system.

### **(I) "Fast responses to community calls"-Focus of urban governance shifted to the grassroots level**

Without a firm foundation, mountains would move and hills would shake. General Secretary Xin Jinping explained that the vast number of tasks relating to the promotion of stable reform and development depend on good grassroots government, the responsibility for the successful implementation of the Party national policies rests of grassroots government, and the foundation of the work to modernize of national governance and governance capacity rests with grassroots governance.

In 2017, Beijing pioneered a work model of "fast responses to community calls" in urban governance, and identified the model as its No.1 reform issue for the following year. In February 2018, after a review of work carried out in Pinggu District, the whitepaper Implementation Plan for

"Fast Responses to Community Calls" as an Institutional Innovation for Subdistrict Governance through Party Building was issued to establish a response mechanism for serving the people. The mechanism addresses community-level governance challenges by smoothing the "last mile" of implementation.

In November 2018, the 5th Meeting of the CPC Central Commission for Comprehensively Deepening Reforms discussed and adopted the "Fast Responses to Community Calls"-Beijing's Exploration of Institutional Innovations for Grassroots Governance through Party Building. The document fully affirmed Beijing's Party building guided reform to require the government departments to quickly respond to community calls. The documents also set out clear requirements for promoting institutional innovations for grassroots governance through Party building.

## **Column 1**

### **Early Research for "Fast Responses to Community Calls"**

In January 2017, Beijing's Pinggu District piloted the project for "fast responses to community calls", as part of efforts to control the persistent illegal excavation of gold, mountain terrain. A law enforcement framework was established according to which Jinhaihu Town "made the call" and the relevant departments would then provide a "fast response". The relevant law enforcement departments are required to respond within 30 minutes of a call being received.

At the same time, the power of leading law enforcement is devolved to subdistricts, which allows the Party Committee of Jinhaihu Township to command the relevant law enforcement departments under a joint law enforcement mechanism. Pinggu's model has not only served to effectively put an end to illegal excavation and mining, but it also inspired new ideas and new pathways for grassroots governance.

There are three key components to the project of for "fast responses to community calls" .

#### **Responsibilities and rights are clearly defined.**

Provisions on responsibilities at subdistrict level have been defined to clarify the boundaries of rights and responsibilities, and define powers at different levels. The provisions comprise 98 items for subdistricts, and 118 items for townships and towns. Rights are given to subdistricts, townships, and towns to ensure that "community calls" are handled effectively. In particular six rights have been granted to Party work committees in subdistrict, township, and town Party (work) committees, including the right to command and dispatch functional departments for comprehensive law enforcement, to evaluate the performance of dispatched teams of functional departments, and to propose the appointments and dismissals of personnel.

#### **Resources are channelled down to the community level.**

A comprehensive law enforcement platform is presented by the "I+4+N" model to channel and integrate resources at the community level for more effective law enforcement. (In addition to a subdistrict law enforcement brigade, departments for public security, fire protection, transport and market supervision are also close at hand, and the departments responsible for housing, planning and land use, and gardening are on standby.) A subdistrict chief system is implemented. Subdistrict officials serve as subdistrict chiefs who are responsible for environmental improvement and community development at the subdistrict level. A community commissioner system also operates in which community commissioners are employed by subdistricts and work in communities to provide guidance for community development.

### **Burdens on communities are reduced to improve governance effectiveness.**

The community task checklist is organized according to strict access standards. Tasks assigned by municipal departments, and appraisal and demonstration items and certificates have been made less prolix, and forms which members of the community are required to fill have been simplified, so that communities can devote their energy to fulfilling their duties. Institutions at the subdistrict level are divided into six offices, one brigade and three centers.

The project to guarantee "fast responses to community calls" has greatly enhanced the cooperation and coordination between different levels and departments. Government departments are required to report for duty to the grassroots communities, to the front line, and to the people. In this way, the higher levels of government are able to pay close attention to the lower levels; government department are closely connected to department subdistricts organizations, and in this way officials remain closely engaged with the people. Thanks to this mechanism, any problems which arise can be identified and resolved at district and subdistrict levels more effectively and in a timely manner, and new breakthroughs can be achieved in key and difficult work.

### **(II) From fast responses to community calls and swift responses to public complaints to mobilizing all governance bodies**

In order to better resolve the most pressing difficulties and problems that are of the greatest concern to the people, Beijing has enhanced this fast response project by ensuring that calls are responded to rapidly and with a sense of urgency. Departments responsible for handling public complaints are required to respond promptly and work on site for implicit solutions. Extending the project of "fast responses to community calls" to include "swift responses to public complaints" ensures that all calls made by the public are answered. In practice, the two parts of the project are interconnected and integrated. Especially in difficult and complex cases, the mechanism of "fast responses to community calls" facilitates joint action across different levels of government to ensure effective responses to the needs of the public.

Since January 1, 2019, all public complaints received through "12345" citizen service hotline have been directed to subdistricts, townships, towns according to different jurisdictions where possible.

In this way, "fast responses to community calls" goes deeper to receive public complaints on all fronts and solves the problems of then greatest public concern. In June, the work mechanisms for dispatch, assessment, special campaigns, tasked supervision, and coordination for solving key problems were improved. In October, an enterprise service hotline was added to form a unified platform for receiving individual and enterprise complaints in Beijing. Dedicated operators responsible for answering enterprise calls were tasked with listening to and dealing with complaints from enterprises. In October 2020, Beijing Municipal Party Committee and the Beijing Municipal Government issued the Opinions on Further Deepening the Reform for Swift Responses to Public Complaints to drive the reform forward. In September 2021, the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Swift Responses to Public Complaints was adopted at the 33rd Meeting of the 15th Standing Committee of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress, which added further legislative support for the reform. As the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints has become more refined, the work style and public service capacity of Party members and officials have both seen significant improvement.

## Column 2

### Opinions on Further Deepening the Reform for Swift Responses to Public Complaints

The following three systems are central to this reform process:

1. A leadership system for swift responses to public complaints, with responsibilities clearly defined, according to which the Party committee leads the reform process, government takes charge, municipal departments, sub-districts, townships, towns, enterprises and institutions undertake public service functions to implement the reform. Communities and villages adapt to the new system response, and task forces are formed to assist in implementation.

2. A work system of swift responses to public complaints that is based on primary-level overall planning, multi-level collaboration, multi-party participation, and joint contribution.

3. An institutional system for swift responses to public complaints, featuring complete mechanisms, standardized procedures, defined standards and legal guarantees.

Ten work mechanisms:

1. An all-channel receiving mechanism.
2. A classified processing mechanism.
3. A fast and accurate dispatch mechanism.
4. A time-limited handling mechanism.
5. A collaborative management mechanism.
6. A coordinated implementation mechanism.
7. A coordination mechanism for inspection and supervision.
8. A graded and classified evaluation mechanism.
9. A complaint analysis and reporting mechanism.
10. A risk warning and prevention mechanism.

Four key approaches of governance:

1. Proactive governance to promote preemptive measures to prevent complaints.
2. Law-based governance to give a legal basis for "swift responses"
3. Multi-party governance for joint contribution.
4. Data governance with smart applications.

"Swift responses to public complaints" was recorded as one of 2019's top ten buzzwords in Chinese media. This fact reflected the full recognition of the project among the general public and the extent of the project's social impact. Through practical exploration, this project has evolved into a public service mechanism which ensure that public complaints are quickly responded to and efficiently dealt with, mainly via the "12345" citizen service hotline. Regarded as the "barometer" of people's livelihood, the public complaints reflect the needs of the people, while the reform for swift responses tests the commitment of officials to serving the people and the capacity of the governance capacity across all levels of government.

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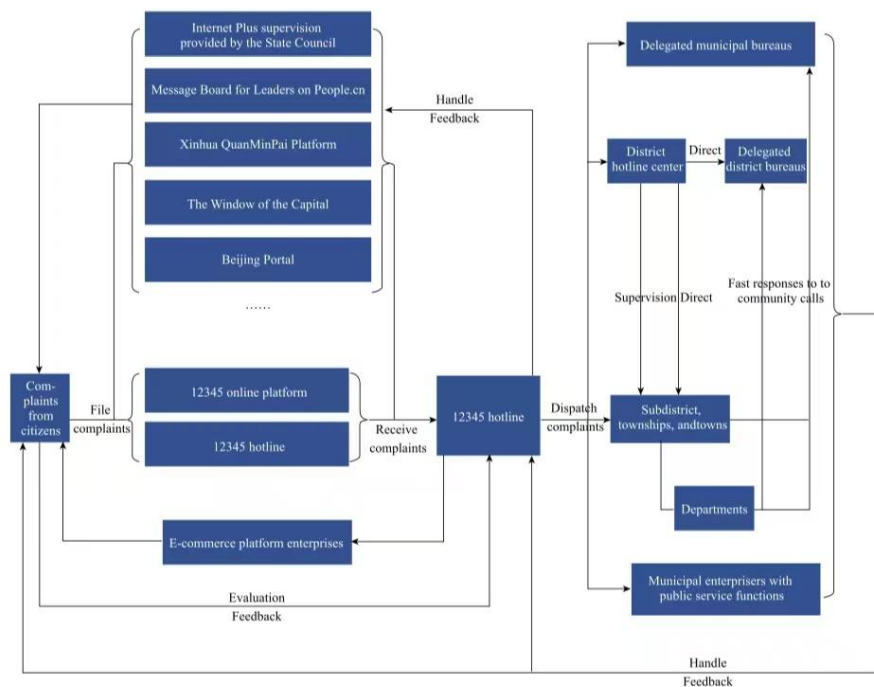


Figure 1 Work diagram for swift responses to public complaints

### (III) From swift responses to public complaints to proactive governance.

#### Effective grassroots governance

The mechanism of swift responses to public complaints addresses problems of public concern.

Generally, complaints that can be immediately and easily handled are effectively resolved. However, when it comes to thorny issues, simple solutions are unlikely to provide an answer. Such issues require a proactive, forward-looking approach to governance that works to nip issues in the bud. At the beginning of this reform, the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Municipal Government took the initiative and proposed a combined solution consisting of the one-stop approach, the analogy approach, and the proactive resolution of common problems. Thanks to this combined approach, a realistic pathway of proactive governance has been created.

The Opinions on Further Deepening the Reform of Swift Responses to Public Complaints whitepaper that was issued in October 2020 explained that proactive governance was necessary to resolve problems before they affect people, and that this would be achieved by deepening the one-stop approach and the analogy approach. Promulgated in September 2021, the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Swift Responses to Public Complaints contained a chapter on proactive governance.

The chapter stated that "municipal and district governments should carry out governance in key fields and regions to resolve frequent and common problems reflected in public complaints", and required "departments responsible for handling public complaints to take a proactive approach to identify and solve problems". In December 2021, the Task Force for Swift Responses to Public Complaints under the Beijing Municipal Commission for Comprehensively Deepening Reforms

issued a whitepaper titled Guidance for Promoting Proactive Governance to Resolve Problems Before They Affect People. The whitepaper institutionalized the exploration of proactive governance, and set down three mechanisms and ten measures to fully transform institutional power into effective governance.

### **Column 3**

#### **Guidance for Promoting Proactive Governance to Resolve Problems Before They Affect People**

Three mechanisms:

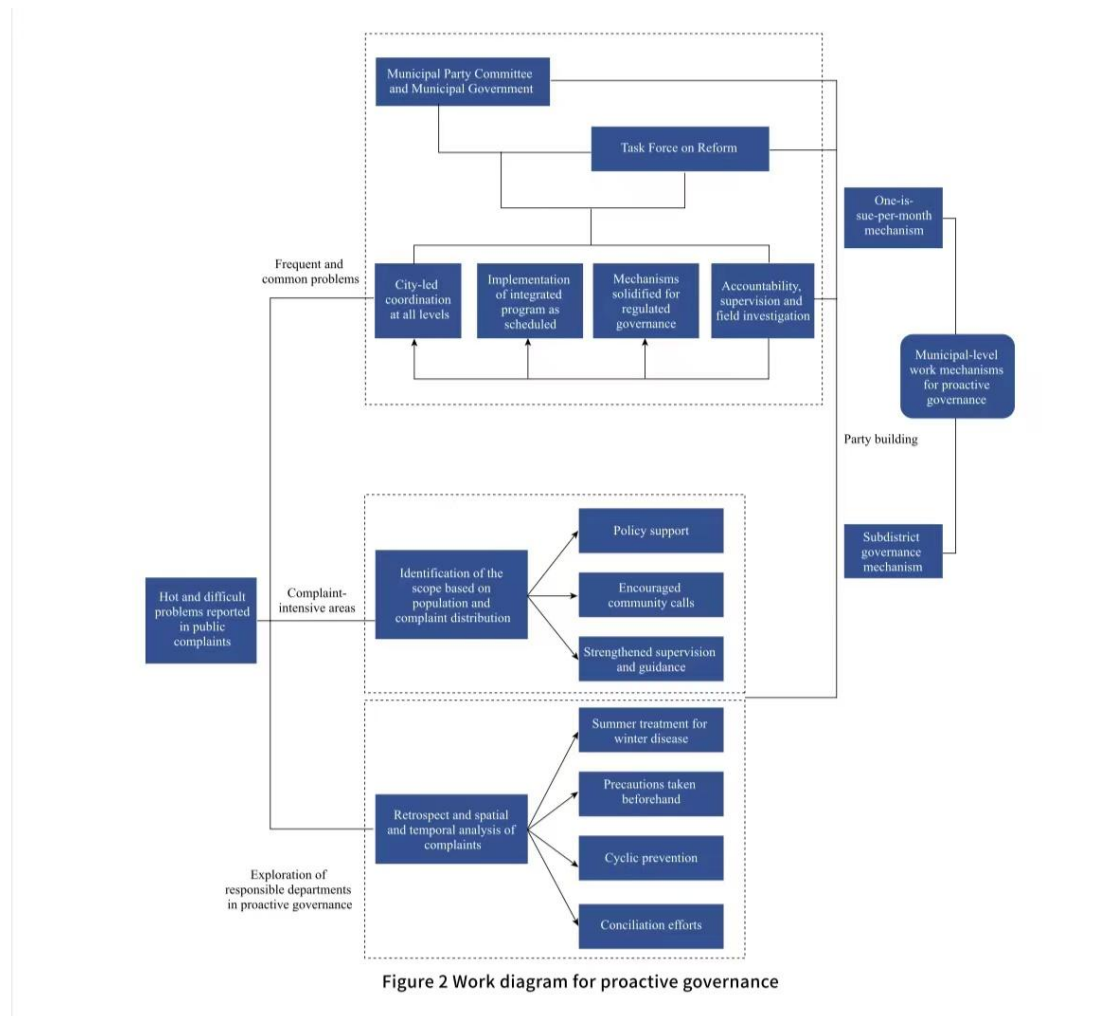
1. Address livelihood difficulties through the one-issue-per-month mechanism
2. Solve key regional problems through targeted campaigns
3. Explore the transformation of public complaints into proactive governance tasks

Ten measures for proactive governance:

1. Promote benefit sharing governance based on collaboration and participation to resolve grassroots conflicts proactively
2. Facilitate the integration of hotline and grid governance to identify and solve problems in a timely manner
3. Implement forward-looking governance to address seasonal cyclical problems
4. Solve difficult and complex problems with reforms and innovative initiatives
5. Strengthen analysis and research to solve problems involving new business formats and new fields
6. Improve emergency management to respond to risks in a timely manner
7. Optimize our business environment to solve common problems of enterprises
8. Enhance coordination between upper and lower levels of government to solve problems
9. Enhance coordination between public security organs, procuratorates, courts and judicial organs to solve problems
10. Enhance coordination between central and local levels of government to solve problems

The reform for swift responses to public complaints has gone beyond the one-stop approach to the proactive approach to promote the resolution of problems before they affect people. This reform effectively harmonizes the institutional advantages of conventional governance and special campaigns, and establishes a one-issue-per-month subdistrict governance mechanism at the municipal level. The one-issue-per-month mechanism is a proactive approach employed to address issues that frequently appear in public complaints, issues which require reforms and innovative measures at the municipal level or those which involve cross-level, cross-departmental responsibility. By implementing resource endowment projects, optimizing governance units and launching special campaigns, the subdistrict governance mechanism has been built to continuously mitigate complaints in subdistricts, townships, and towns where there are a larger number of public complaints and a weak governance foundation.

In practice, all departments involved are also working actively to turn assignments for handling public complaints into tasks of proactive governance, adopting proactive approaches, such as "preventative procedures", "cyclic prevention measures", and "conciliation efforts".



#### Column 4

##### Process of Deepening the Reform for Swift Responses to Public Complaints

In January 2019, the "12345" citizen service hotline was optimized and upgraded, and public complaints received via the hotline were directed to subdistricts, townships, and towns.

In March 2019, the Implementation Opinions on Deepening the Reform for "Fast Responses to Community Calls" Through Party Building whitepaper was issued.

In June 2019, the Implementation Opinions on Optimizing and Upgrading the Work of Swift Responses to Public Complaints Received via the Citizen Service Hotline whitepaper was issued. The publication improved the work mechanisms for dispatch, assessment, special campaigns, task supervision, and coordination on key problems.

In October 2019, the Work Plan to Add Enterprise Service Function to the Beijing 12345 Citizen Service Hotline was issued. This publication established a unified municipal platform for receiving individual and corporate complaints with the addition of an enterprise service hotline.

In January 2020, the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Subdistrict Offices were promulgated and put into effect. These regulations solidified successful experience garnered in grassroots governance in the form of local regulations. The projects of "Fast responses to community calls" and "swift responses to public complaints" were part of this experience.



In October 2020, the Opinions on Further Deepening the Reform of Swift Response white paper to Public Complaints was issued.

In February 2021, The 2021 Work Plan for Swift Responses to Public Complaints strategy for the Resolution of Key Livelihood Complaints in a One-Issue-per-month Manner was released. In September 2021, the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Swift Responses to Public Complaints were put into effect. The implementation of the regulations meant that the mechanism of swift response to public complaints was now legal reality.

In December 2021, the Guidance for Promoting Proactive Governance to Resolve Problems Before They Affect People was issued to deepen the reform for swift responses to public complaints so that it could become an expression of proactive governance.

In June and September 2022, two groups of the One-Issue-per-Month Special List for Swift Responses to Public Complaints were released by the Office of the Municipal Party Committee and the Task Force Office for Swift Responses to Public Complaints. The list defines responsibilities at city, district and subdistrict levels for addressing frequent and common problems, and provides guidelines for solving specific problems at the grassroots level under the mechanism of fast responses to community calls.

In June 2022, the 13th CPC Beijing Congress drew up further plans for deepening the reform for swift response to public complaints, providing a clear blueprint for future reforms. The Congress underlined the importance of standing on the side of the people, and putting one's heart into the one-stop resolution of pressing difficulties and the problems of the utmost concern to the people, in the spirit of true sincerity. The Congress also emphasized that, proactive governance should be further developed so that problems can be resolved before they affect people. By strengthening collaboration and coordination between different levels and departments of government toward co-construction and co-governance, the mechanism of fast responses to community calls will truly enhance the capacity of grassroots self-governance. The project will see the people playing a principal role in Beijing's swift-response model of mega-city governance.

## **II. Practice and Innovation**

The reform for swift responses to public complaints has facilitated public demand-driven mega-city governance, with the "12345" citizen service hotline acting as its driving force. The reform has also fostered a new urban governance system characterized by Party building, proactive governance, legal protections, joint contribution, and technology support. The reform opens up a new path of mega-city governance driven by swift responses to public complaints, and serves a vivid example of how Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era is taking root in China.

### **(I) Upholding Party leadership and building a methodical and coordinated system for advancing the reform**

General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that "[we must] safeguard the authority of the CPC Central Committee and its centralized, unified leadership, and implement Party leadership in all aspects and phases in support of the cause of the Party and the country". The reform for swift responses to public complaints adheres to the requirements of Party building, strengthens Party leadership politically, ideologically, organizationally and institutionally, and gives full play to the Party's role of overall planning and coordination, while demonstrating the importance of Party leadership the task of advancing reform on all fronts.

#### **1. Strengthen the organizational leadership system**

### **Heightened guidance for the reform of swift responses to public complaints.**

The Standing Committee of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee has listened to the report on the reform for swift responses to public complaints, carried out discussions and made special arrangements. The Reform for Swift Responses to Public Complaints Task Force has been set up under the Beijing Municipal Commission for Comprehensively Deepening Reforms to and will be responsible for holistic planning, overall implementation, and the supervision of the project. The reforms for "fast responses to community calls" and "swift responses to public complaints" have been subjected to the inspection of the First Inspection Group of the Beijing Municipal Commission for Comprehensively Deepening Reforms for three consecutive years. The main leaders of the Municipal Government have from time to time made arrangements on thorny issues and discussed reform methods to promote the swift resolution of problems. The municipal leaders in charge are responsible for supervision, stepping up thematic arrangements by means of monthly meetings and onsite inspections, and "listening to public opinions and resolving public concerns" to solve the biggest problems facing the people.

### **A full-chain work responsibility system.**

The reform for swift responses to public complaints will demonstrate the leadership of the Party committee and be implemented by the government. The reform will see the Secretary General as head of the Party committee and the governments at all levels taking charge and assuming accountability. The Secretary General of the Municipal Party Committee chairs the monthly review meeting of district Party committee (department Party members group) secretaries, and the secretaries of district Party committee holds regular review meetings of secretaries at lower levels of government. This mode of operation represents a working mechanism in which leaders at all levels of government provide guidance, leadership, coordination and supervision. Progress in the reform has been included in the annual Party building review of departments at all levels, as well as in the routine appraisal of leading teams and leading officials at all levels, as a reference for the selection and appointment of officials. The Municipal Commission for Discipline Inspection and the Municipal Supervisory Commission carry out a special inspection to target any instances of individuals or departments showing a lack of enthusiasm in their implementation of the reform for swift responses to public complaints.

## **2. Streamlining the work system**

### **Receiving a range of public complaints via one hotline**

The "12345" citizen service hotline system integrates 64 government service hotlines and covers 343 subdistricts, townships, and towns, 16 districts, 65 municipal departments, 46 state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and 60 green pass enterprises. Designed to receive public complaints, the system quickly answers calls from the people around the clock, seven days a week, the whole year round. In order to extend the hotline to the internet, an online platform has also been established on "The Window of the Capital" Beijing government services website. It is just one component of the internet-based matrix for swift responses to public complaints, which also incorporates Beijing 12345's official Wechat account, Weibo, the Beijing Portal app, and the Message Board for Leaders on People.cn.

### **Fast and direct delegation to competent departments**

According to the classification and jurisdiction of public complaints, a delegation directory containing 2,395 items at three levels has been developed and is subject to dynamic adjustment and updates for more accurate distribution of responsibility. Subdistricts, townships, and towns

should respond as quickly as possible to public complaints that have been delegated to them to the best of their abilities. If it becomes clear that the scale or complexity of a problem is too great for the resolution capacities of subdistricts, townships, and towns, they can call for assistance and the relevant higher level departments will respond swiftly. This reform will see public complaints being directed to the front line of governance and addressed on site with immediate to provide swift solutions. At the same time, public complaints are copied to district governments whose supervision and coordination expedite the handling process. The Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal Government can strengthen overall arrangements to produce a problem-solving synergy while facilitating coordination between different levels of government.

#### **Four levels of response collaborative response.**

Requests are divided into consultations, complaints, suggestions and emergencies, and processed according to priority and type of industry. Differentiated management is practiced, and response times are divided between four different deadlines for operators: 2 hours, 24 hours, 7 days and 15 days. For complex problems which require a cross-departmental response, the relevant departments will work on site, hold group consultations, and take joint action under the mechanism of "fast responses to community calls". This approach pools the resources of different departments to find the fastest and most effective solution. A hierarchical coordination mechanism has been established to address problems involving different industries and regions. Party committees, governments and industry-competent departments at higher levels of government will provide coordinated solutions to urgent and difficult problems that might present a challenge to lower levels.

### **3. Building an evaluation system**

#### **Judgment by the people.**

After the 7 day complaint resolution time limit is exceeded, "12345" citizen service hotline staff will seek to obtain feedback via follow-up phone calls, text messages, and online platforms. People will be able given the chance to evaluate the response to public complaints, effectiveness of the solution, and the attitude of the staff. The government's performance will be judged by the people.

#### **A fair and open assessment mechanism.**

Response rates, resolution rates and public satisfaction are core indicators of the assessment. This mechanism demonstrates the government's commitment to solving problems and guaranteeing public satisfaction. Government departments and the private sector alike will be subject to this. Municipal departments in charge should take the initiative to provide coordination and guidance for addressing frequently reported industry problems. At the district level, comprehensive assessments are conducted according to a monitoring and assessment indicator system that covers "seven aspects" and "five areas"®. As such, governments at all levels are mobilized to increase the effective supply of public services in a targeted manner to strengthen areas of weakness and improve living standards. Taking into account municipal priorities, these assessment criteria and indicator weights can be adjusted as appropriate to apply to epidemic prevention and control and the two "important minor details" (garbage classification and property management). This gives full play to the guiding role of the assessment mechanism for swift responses to public complaints.

#### **A ranking system to encourage grassroots government to overcome difficulties.**

Subdistricts are given monthly rankings and month-on-month rankings which are calculated

by response rates, resolution rates and public satisfaction. The rating will then be used to categorize subdistricts, townships, and towns as 'advanced', 'making progress', 'undergoing restructure', or

'special measures'. The worst performers in the reform for swift responses to public complaints will be subjected to government inquiries. The head of the Organization Department of the Municipal Party Committee who also serves as a member of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Party Committee carries out monthly group talks with the Party secretaries in the worst performing ten districts. The Organization Department of the Municipal Party Committee, in conjunction with municipal departments such as government services, and development and reform departments engage in talks with the underperforming subdistricts, townships, and towns, the weakest municipal departments and public service enterprises, and slow-progress subdistricts to accelerate rectification and improvements. Regarding issues of pressing and overwhelming public concern, particularly those which have been covered by the media, Party and government inspection departments at the municipal and district level will perform joint inspections to ensure that such issues can be swiftly resolved.

① "Seven aspects" include childcare, education, employment, medical services, elderly care, housing and social assistance, and "five areas" denotes a life that is convenient and comfortable, with more choices, in a fair and safe society.

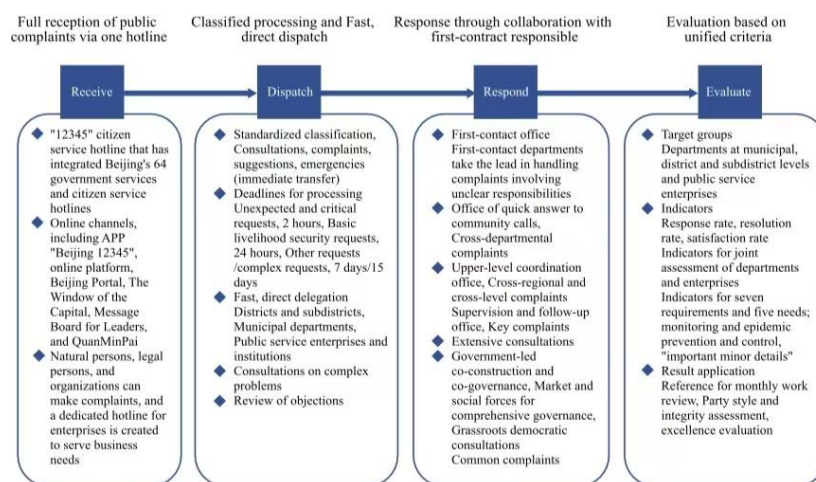


Figure 3 "Receive-delegate-respond-evaluate" full-cycle closed-loop process

## (II) Establishing a mechanism of proactive urban governance driven by public needs

General Secretary Xi Jinping called for "a problem-oriented approach for governance that addresses issues at the source through a combination of special campaigns and systemic and holistic

measures". In response to the frequent and common problems reflected in public complaints, Beijing persists in its work for proactive governance which is supported by swift responses to public complaints, to usher in a new stage of urban governance. Remediation has been carried out in key fields and regions to address both the root causes and symptoms of slow progress while

driving control efforts on a larger scale, and leading urban governance to a new stage.

## **1. Creating a one-issue-per-month mechanism to resolve livelihood difficulties**

### **Proactive governance over frequent and common problems reflected in public complaints.**

As an important instrument for proactive governance, the one-issue-per-month mechanism adopts a demand-driven problem-oriented approach to address frequent and common problems that have been screened through big data analysis, problems that require reform and innovation initiatives at the municipal level, and problems which call for cross-level and cross-departmental involvement to reach a resolution. For each problem, a municipal leader and a municipal competent department are designated to work in collaboration with the relevant agencies and districts to form a work model of coordination across city, district and subdistrict level of government.

**Checklist management.** A total of 27 frequently reported issues such as difficulties obtaining the property ownership certificate were selected in 2021, and 17 problems such as a lack of elevators in old residential buildings were selected in 2022. For thorny issues, "One Program and Three Checklists" are drawn up at the beginning of the year. Work towards a resolution is implemented in a project-based manner under a checklist management system, with clear annual quantifiable objectives, tasks and schedules. To ensure that difficult and complex problems are dealt with in a focused manner, targeted policies are applied to address both the root causes and the symptoms of problems.

#### **Column 5**

##### **"One Program and Three Checklists"**

##### **—The One-Issue-per-Month Target Management Mechanism**

##### **"One Program"**

**Solution:** An overall program for resolving problems, consisting of problem description, cause analysis, target setting, tasks, responsibilities, and quantitative targets. It is essentially a process of developing solutions through problem analysis.

##### **"Three Checklists"**

**Responsibility checklist:** Responsibilities clearly defined for departments that take charge and provide cooperation in the resolution of problems. (12 municipal departments in charge and more than 50 cooperating departments were designated in 2021, and 13 municipal departments in charge and more than 40 cooperating departments in 2022)

**Task checklist:** Specific tasks involved in resolving problems, which can be measured by monthly, quarterly and annual targets. (The task checklist for 27 problems in 2021 included more than 600 tasks and the task checklist for 17 problems in 2022 contained more than 450 tasks.)

**Policy checklist:** Policy documents that are needed in order to crack problems. (More than 110 documents were issued in 2021, and nearly 100 documents have been introduced in 2022.)

**Scenario-based governance.** "Lists, Tables, Charts, and Q&A sessions" are created in accordance with specific problem-solving scenarios to establish standards, procedures and institutions for resolving problems. The lists define the duties at the city, district and subdistrict levels when it comes to solving problems. Two groups of the *One-Issue-per-Month Special List for Swift Responses to Public Complaints* were released by the Municipal Commission Office of Public Sectors Reform and Reform for Swift Response to Public Complaints Task Force to clarify

the relationship between different levels of government and the responsibilities of different departments. The groups provide an operable and institutional guide for locating the relevant departments in the project for "quick responses to community calls" and facilitating departmental synergies in the problem-solving process.

#### **Column 6**

##### **"List, Table, Chart, Q&A"**

##### **—The One-Issue-per-Month Scenario-based Governance Mechanism**

**"List"**: List of Proposed Duties, which defines the duties at city, district and subdistrict levels in solving problems according to problem-solving scenarios.

**"Table"**: Table of Policy Measures and Reform Initiatives, which systematically summarizes the policy measures and innovative initiatives to solve the specific problems under the one-issue-per-month mechanism.

**"Chart"**: Workflow Chart, which clarifies the problem-solving workflow.

**"Q&A"**: Policy Q&A, which contains easy-to-understand questions and answers on policy measures introduced to solve specific problems.

**Whole-process oversight to monitor governance effectiveness.** The Municipal Commission for Discipline Inspection and the Municipal Supervisory Commission have set up a supervision mechanism for oversight, discipline and accountability according to the one-issue-per-month system. The Municipal Administration of Government Services has, in conjunction with the Municipal Party Committee and the Municipal Government Inspection Office, established a mechanism of joint routine supervision and key inspection. The Citizen Hotline Service Center tracks progress in responding to complaints through regular follow-up activities, and monitors once-every-half-month changes in the volume of problem-specific complaints while keeping abreast of changes in the volume of complaints compared to the previous year. Public satisfaction surveys on problem-specific policy implementation and effectiveness are carried out by third parties in the middle and at the end of the year.

#### **2. Launching subdistrict-level special governance campaigns to strengthen weakness in regional governance**

**Special governance campaigns in areas with frequent public complaints.** The subdistricts, townships, and towns which frequently receive public complaints tend to have large populations, cover large geographical areas, lie on the urban-rural fringes and lack a strong grassroots governance foundation. These places are targeted for the implementation of systematic and proactive governance, and will serve as a model for the creation of regional governance. A refined management model that combines a program and checklists is adopted. The intention is to develop an integrated program for subdistrict-level and district-level remediation and improvement. Four quantifiable, refined, and concrete, itemized checklists will be drawn up to support the program for each target subdistrict, township or town.®

**Close integration with municipal priorities.** The subdistrict governance mechanism should be integrated with municipal priorities, including the one-issue-per-month mechanism and urban renewal and beautiful countryside initiatives, and make target subdistricts the key demonstration and pilot areas for the one-issue-per-month mechanism. Municipal departments will integrate the problems and sites frequently mentioned in public complaints into work plan, and give preferences

to target subdistricts when it comes to transfer payments and subsidies. Targeted remediation and improvement projects should be implemented to fill livelihood disparities more quickly, with efforts focused on effectively and fundamentally solving key and difficult problems reported by the public.

**Improving supervision and governance mechanisms.** A sound supervision mechanism featuring closed-loop management has been set up. The mechanism consists of ex-ante talks, in-process regulation, and follow-ups. Subdistricts, towns, and townships that rank among the ten subdistricts with the highest incidence of public complaints but have not been targeted for proactive governance are subject to precautionary talks, progress analysis of listed problems and dynamic analysis of public complaints based on comprehensive a regulation platform for urban management. They will be subject to timely and effective measures to promote appropriate the resolution of listed problems and newly added frequent public complaints, continued monitoring of changes in public complaints about target subdistricts that are no longer subject to municipal supervision, and unceasing support from municipal departments for district-level and subdistrict-level comprehensive governance, by such means as "fast responses to community calls."

① In these cases, the One Program and Four Checklists mechanism is adopted. "One Program" refers to the annual work program for remediation and improvement of target subdistricts. "Four checklists" includes checklist of endorsed projects, which is a list of projects to be carried out with the support of annual municipal grants for remediation and improvement in target subdistricts; checklist of tasks, which is a list of tasks in the annual remediation and improvement of target subdistricts that do not involve the use of municipal subsidies; checklist of expected support, which is a list of "community calls" and specific support expected from relevant municipal departments in the process of carrying out annual remediation and improvement in target subdistricts; checklist of policy needs, which is a list of policy reforms and innovations expected from relevant municipal departments in the process of carrying out annual remediation and improvement in target subdistricts.

### **3. Actively transform public complaints into proactive governance tasks**

**Task identification for proactive governance to resolve problems before they affect the people.** By systematically analyzing public complaints, relevant departments should pinpoint the common root causes behind individual complaints, make checklist of recurrent problems and problem areas, and then propose tasks for proactive governance. On this basis, proactive governance is advanced in a problem-oriented manner, realizing a transition from swift responses to public complaints to demand-driven proactive governance.

#### **Encouraging implementation of proactive governance projects at subdistrict level.**

To address frequent wide-ranging public complaints, proactive governance projects can be launched at the subdistrict level, in line with municipal priorities such as the one-issue-per-month mechanism and the remediation and improvement campaign, while taking into account local annual priorities and realities. During the implementation period, evaluation and incentive policies will be applied to mobilize and protect the enthusiasm of grassroots officials toward proactive governance.

#### **(III) Staying committed to legal protections to improve the rule of law when conducting urban governance**

General Secretary Xi Jinping stated that "We should better align decision making for reform and development with legislative decision making, improving the rule of law through further

reform and ensuring reform and innovation in all fields within the full spirit of the rule of law, so as to provide a legal basis for national development and major reforms". In the reform for swift responses to public complaints, the practice and review of our experience are synchronized with a focus put on key tasks and key aspects, and existing systems are improved and enriched according to practical experience to ensure far-reaching steady law-based reform.

### **1. Developing regulations to consolidate effective reform**

#### **Ensuring legislation with whole-process people's democracy upheld during the legislative process.**

The legislative task force on Beijing Municipal Regulations on Swift Responses to Public Complaints has been set up for high-level planning. The task force has carried out in-depth legislative research with whole-process participation and guidance. Teams led by municipal heads have solicited opinions at the grassroots level, while carrying out extensive legislative consultations in the municipal people's political consultative conference. Making full use of the "10,000 delegates to the grassroots" mechanism, deputies to the municipal people's congress have also stayed engaged with the people through the House of Deputies and Deputy Liaison Station and solicited public opinions through three rounds. In total, more than 9,000 suggestions have been collected from over 11,000 deputies and nearly 67,000 grassroots officers and citizens.

#### **Providing for regulated procedures and defined responsibilities to strengthen the sense of responsibility to serve the people.**

Work procedures have been standardized across all steps of public service including comprehensive reception, classified processing, and accurate delegation, responses, assessments and evaluations to ensure the achievement of proactive governance. Information about the appropriate government bodies responsible for receiving and responding to public complaints has been presented clearly to the public, and citizens have been empowered and shown how they can submit complaints. Based on the innovative experience of governance in the capital, people-centered legislation relating to services, institutional guarantees and greater level of reform have been achieved in the form of an original law with Beijing characteristics. The Regulations make principled provisions at the operational level, leaving room for deepening reforms going forward.

### **2. Improve systems supporting the reform**

#### **Delegating powers to grassroots government.**

In November 2019, the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Subdistrict Offices were issued, solidifying in the form of local regulations the successful experience of grassroots governance. The projects of "Fast responses to community calls" and "swift responses to public complaints" were both mentioned in the document. The Regulations define the responsibilities of subdistrict offices, and the delegation the powers of administrative law enforcement, organization and coordination to grassroots government in order to strengthen their service and management capacity. The legislation further defines the relationships between different levels of government and highlights the role of subdistrict and community governance as an essential part of the wider structure of national governance. The Regulations clearly reduce the burdens on communities, so that they can devote energy to carrying out their duties.

#### **Refining supporting measures.**

Documents addressing key aspects of service have been issued. Measures relating to the first-contact responsibility system and tentative measures on improving work transparency have



been successively formulated, while arrangements for the delegation of work have been more clearly defined. Measures on assessment have also been revised. All districts have set up a dual-assessment mechanism for "fast responses to community calls" in accordance with the Regulations to urge competent departments to perform their duties and responsibilities to the highest standard. Departments will develop checklists in support of the implementation of the Regulations to ensure the fulfillment of their responsibilities. Special rules will be introduced to promote central to local coordination for solving problems. Assessments relating to the work of district-level departments in the reform for quick responses to public complaints will be strengthened, and the quality and efficiency of responses to industry appeals will be improved.

#### **Optimizing regulations and systems.**

Focusing on prominent problems reported by the people, the system of regulations and institutions has been improved to provide legal guarantees for the systematic progress and sustained development of the reform. Examples of such supporting legislation include the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Property Management, the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Public Health Emergency Response, and the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Encouraging Civilized Conduct have been promulgated, and the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Management of Municipal Domestic Waste and the Beijing Municipal Regulations on Promoting Volunteerism (revised).

### **3. Promoting cooperation and linkage between the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints and the public security organs, procuratorates, courts and judicial organs**

Responses to suggestions and complaints from the people should comply with the law. Drawing on the Fengqiao model for a new era, efforts should be made to address problems related to law enforcement and litigation, and to protect people's rights and interests, so that conflicts and disputes arising at the grassroots level can be nipped in the bud. Mechanisms have been created for routine exchanges, two way connections, on-site policy services and information sharing between the "12345" citizen service hotline and the "110" emergency services. A procuratorate-hotline cooperation mechanism has also been set up facilitate oversight on the effectiveness of public complaints work, so that legal supervision and legal services become an inseparable component of the resolution of prominent problems that are frequently reported by the people. Through the litigation service hotline, judicial services are provided across the city to grassroots government departments responsible for handling public complaints. The court system will remain deeply involved in research relating to law enforcement and litigation issues under the one-issue-per-month mechanism, thus making a contribution to the practice of providing governance at the source of the problem. Public legal services for swift responses to public complaints are also scaled up by exploring a conflict and dispute resolution mechanism that combines mediation, the "12345" hotline, and the involvement of a panel of lawyers. This practice enhances the effectiveness of governance through the rule of law.

#### **(IV) Sticking to multi-party participation to create a new pattern of collaborative social governance**

General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that "[we should improve the system of social governance based on collaboration, participation and benefit sharing, so as to achieve a positive interaction among government governance, social self-regulation and resident autonomy, and create a community of social governance in which everyone fulfills their responsibilities and shares in the benefits." As a bridge between the Party, the government, and the people, the

mechanism of swift responses to public complaints channels resources from all sectors of society and fully mobilizes the active participation of all stakeholders to stimulate the vitality of society as a whole and promote the realization of extensive collaboration and joint contribution, with a view to creating a new pattern of social governance for the common good.

### **1. Facilitating public participation and consultation to resolve public complaints**

#### **A Regional Party building coordination platform to discuss regional development.**

Party building coordination committees have been built at district, subdistrict and community levels, with Party leaders at higher levels of government serving as the heads of lower-level Party building coordination committees. This arrangement results in a grassroots work system that integrates Party building in communities, organizations and industries. Party members in active service are required to report for duty at communities of service and residency, while efforts are made to leverage the resources of central organizations, SOEs and universities in the district. By doing so, members of government are required to get actively involved in grassroots governance instead of simply looking on when problems arise.

#### **Fueling public enthusiasm about grassroots self-governance.**

Innovative channels for local autonomy have been created in the forms of an offline discussion hall and an online WeChat group. Discussion halls, talkfests, boards of management, and community WeChat groups all broaden the channels of public participation by giving people an opportunity to voice their concerns, and by providing a channel for collecting people's opinions and gathering their wisdom. Timely responses and solutions are given to a large number of so-called "minor details" of concern to the people via the campaign's official Wechat account. This effectively shortens the processing period for solving complaints and improves work efficiency under the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints.

#### **Innovative public opinion supervision via news media.**

Television programs reaching the masses, such as "A Step Forward" and "Swift Responses to Public Complaints" have been launched to promote the resolution of thorny problems and create a rational, warm, positive, pragmatic atmosphere in which the people can voice their opinions. The integrated media center and the "New-era Civilization Practice Center" in each district are connected to the "12345" citizen service hotline platform to provide a new media integrated approach to facilitate swift responses to public complaints and pool advantageous resources in all aspects to support collaborative social governance.

### **2. Encourage market players to take an active part in the swift responses to public complaints project**

#### **Extending the project for swift responses to public complaints to industry.**

Market players are advised to base industry governance on the grassroots level, so as to drive grassroots governance together with industry governance. The Work Program on Industry Governance under the Guidance of Party Building (Pilot) has been developed to give classified guidance and apply targeted policy, with a coverage of 24 key industries such as the Internet and legal services.

#### **A green channel for expediting the resolution of consumer disputes.**

Focusing on prominent problems of public concern in market management and consumption, public complaints are directly delegated to 60 platform enterprises. This method not only increases the efficiency of settling general consumer disputes, but also forces enterprises to strengthen self-discipline and aim to solve problems in a proactive manner.

### **3. Including universities and Party schools in the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints**

The Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Municipal Government both attach a high degree of importance to the work to extend the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints to universities and Party schools, for the purpose of "accurately responding to the concerns of teachers and students, improving the quality of campus services, resolving conflicts in a timely manner, and making school governance more effective". A closed loop of work has been formed to meet the demands of all teachers and students. Special attention is being paid to everyday work relating to epidemic prevention and control. A round-the-clock reporting channel has been made available to provide classified services to teachers and students. Data mining, evaluation, and analysis have been strengthened to accurately remove the pain points and blockage points of campus operation, and promote the transformation toward data-driven and tailored teacher-student services. Attention has been paid to elevate the position of ideological problems so that they are viewed to be as important as practical problems, through "ideological and political courses" for epidemic prevention and control. Implementing the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints in universities and Party schools has been written into the Circular on Further Optimizing the Measures for Scientific and Precision Prevention and Control of the COVID-19 Epidemic issued by the State Council's Comprehensive Team of the Joint Covid-19 Prevention and Control Mechanism.

Under the "12345" citizen service hotline platform, a case study for ideological and political theory has been created for schools in Beijing. Six pilot universities, including Peking University and Tsinghua University, have worked on teaching arrangements, case preparation and curriculum development to expedite the introduction of the "swift responses to public complaints" project case study into universities. The Central Party School has offered case study lectures on swift responses to public complaints. The Beijing Municipal Party School also runs courses on swift responses to public complaints as main courses, and holds special training courses on "deepening the reform for swift responses to public complaints to promote the resolution of problems before they affect people", which brings together a wide range of forces.

#### **(V) Making use of technology to improve data governance effectiveness**

General Secretary Xi Jinping attaches great importance to the role of the Internet and big data in urban governance, stressing the need "to establish a sound mechanism of big data-assisted decision-making and social governance and promote innovative models of government administration and social governance for the purpose of scientific government decision-making, precision social governance and efficient public services". Utilizing the technological advantages of the Internet, big data, artificial intelligence and blockchain technology, the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints promotes the application of data governance in various scenarios to improve government service quality and optimize the business environment, thereby contributing to refined, intelligent, and professional urban governance.

##### **1. Data integration to assist decision-making services**

###### **Full convergence of social opinion databases.**

Data management standards and processes have been defined. Data convergence has been completed for over 34 million public complaints, 2.4 million pieces of basic data from legal persons from enterprises and 7000 pieces of community and village information websites. With the help of big data technology, deep diagnosis and solutions for blockage points and pain points

have been achieved Real-time analysis of eight sections in five aspects covered urban management, rural management, market management, public safety and public services. A big data analysis and decision-making platform has been established, containing the volume, categories and origin regions of public complaints, and assessment rankings and urban problem directories. The platform performs dynamic monitoring of social opinions and sends early warnings in a timely manner, which enhances the capacity of proactive governance over risky issues, especially in relation to frequent problems and risk-prone areas.

**In-depth mining of historical data.** Based on intelligent analysis of the characteristics and laws of event development, scientific forecasting can be conducted to optimize the effective allocation of limited resources at the grassroots level of government. The "daily notification, weekly summary, and monthly analysis" mechanism has been set up, which summarizes and analyzes public complaints on a regular basis to assist leaders in decision-making, and supplies data and recommendations to 51 municipal task forces or leading group offices and 52 departments for special governance campaigns. Thanks to the WuDaoCorpora 2.0 smart tool, the content of the citizen hotline knowledge base on governance consultation can be found on the internet platform according and is divided in to different categories of questions that have been asked. In total, over 12,000 questions & answers on policies are accessible, which makes smooth the "last mile" of policy implementation.

## **2. Deep integration of service hotline and grid governance**

### **Refined "hotline-grid" public service model.**

Communication grids have been comprehensively brought into play in governance by proactively pinpointing and dealing with problems, and capitalizing on strengths across platforms, mechanisms and personnel. Data integration between hotline systems and grid platforms across district-level urban management command centers has also been promoted. In line with this system, component-level, event-level and demand-level grid inspections are classified and treated differently. A comparative analysis of public complaints and grid issues is conducted for the purpose of guaranteeing swift responses. This approach not only broadens channels for back-end disposal and end-of-line law enforcement on a grid basis, but also provides the basis for launching special campaigns, supporting centralized rectifications efforts, and deploying management and law enforcement forces. As such, service management can be more focused on the most pressing difficulties and needs of the people, with the support of a proactive approach for addressing issues of urban management before problem affect the people. This contributes to long-term collaborative, proactive and smart governance with increasing levels of refined urban management.

**Deepened "civilized city building-hotline-grid" linkage mechanism.** Building on the "hotline-grid" public service model, we have further expanded the range and scope of our services, and widened the breadth of this reform by incorporating indicators for building a civilized city. Efforts to build a civilized city are mainstreamed into the hotline-grid integrated proactive governance system in such a way that the creation and sharing of problem directories, the clarification and alignment of problem rectification standards, and the standardization of problem handling procedures are greatly facilitated. This linkage promotes coordinated progress in swift responses to public complaints, grid-based governance, and special governance campaigns.

## **3. Smart applications to serve overall interests and boost development**

**A solid line of defense against the epidemic.** In the fight against the epidemic, the big data

provided by the "12345" citizen service hotline functions as "barometer" and "sensor", which provides powerful support for the epidemic prevention and control effort. The hotline platform has scaled up its reception capacity and assigned epidemic-related requests. A section dedicated to epidemic prevention and control has been created in the official WeChat account to handle eight categories of requests, including emergency medical treatment, medicine delivery, materials supply and nucleic acid testing in a timely manner. Maps of epidemic blockade sites have been drawn, and epidemic-related requests are reported on an hourly basis around the clock. The pattern of epidemic-related requests is summarized on a regular basis to provide references for decision-making on epidemic prevention and control. Smart applications like these facilitate the heart to heart connection between the Party committee and the government with the people in the battle against the epidemic.

#### **Service optimization to facilitate the resumption of work and production of enterprises.**

A service mechanism for key enterprises has been set up by dedicating operators to the resumption of work and production effort. The reception process has been streamlined to ensure supportive policies are more accessible to enterprises. Assistance has also been made available to solve problems concerning truck passes, rent reductions, and the resumption of work and production during the epidemic. A consultation mechanism for difficult assignments has been established to analyze the common concern of enterprises on a regular basis. The supportive policies of various departments, as well as brief questions & answers, have been summarized and updated in a timely manner to effectively help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) understand the latest epidemic prevention and control policies and supportive policies.

#### **III. Effectiveness and Experience**

General Secretary Xi Jinping revealed that that the Party's most remarkable political strength lies in its ties with the people. He stressed the need to deeply understand the close connection between development and stability, between development and the people's livelihood, and between development and the people's will, and make it possible for people to benefit from the achievements of development. The focus of the reform for swift responses to public complaints in Beijing is to closely integrate the demands of the people with the tasks of government. Under the leadership of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Municipal Government, an annual work plan has been established with a view to meeting the needs of the people. A corresponding assessment and evaluation mechanism that highlights the satisfaction levels among the people has been established to ensure the fulfillment of responsibilities to make life more convenient and comfortable for the people. The philosophy of a "city of the people" has been put into practice. After five years of unremitting exploration, and serving as an example of upholding the people-centered philosophy of development, the reform has become an important instrument the work to address issues of public concern, especially in "seven aspects" and "five areas", and improve people's livelihood and well-being by providing a higher level of public services. The reform has reshaped the launch and assessment mechanism for practical livelihood projects, changed the work style of Party members and officials at all levels of government, promoted work toward the greatest political achievement of benefiting the people, and effectively spurred the profound project of achieving of mega-city governance which is underpinned by this mechanism. Designed according to the distinctive characteristics of the times, and in the spirit of a desire to stand with the people, the reform represents a vivid example of the successful governance of China, presents Beijing as a model for the modernization of the national governance system and

governance capacity, and delivers satisfaction to the people.

**(I) "New mechanisms" of mega-city governance underpinned by Party building**

**General Secretary Xi Jinping underscored that "the CPC is the leading core of the socialist cause with Chinese characteristics, so we must strengthen and improve Party leadership and give full play to the Party's role of overall leadership and coordination".** In the new era, under the Party's strong leadership, we have, through the reform for swift responses to public complaints, translated the Party's political and organizational strengths and close ties with the people into real governance strengths, forged a new path of Chinese-style modernization, and developed people-dominated governance, allowing the strengths of the governance of the Party to drive the governance of China.

**Urban governance capacity is enhanced by the Party's political strengths.** Over the past five years, Beijing has placed the leadership of the Party committee in the primary position, and established a new mechanism of swift responses to public complaints through Party building, which features Party committee leadership, government implementation, collaboration, and is subject to evaluation by the people. With the establishment of mechanisms of monthly assessments and talks with the worst-performing areas, progress in the reform has been incorporated in the annual Party building review and the routine appraisal of leading teams and officials at all levels, and as so, it serves as a reference for the selection and appointment of officials. This urges Party committee heads to truly fulfill their leadership responsibilities, and provides a solid political guarantee for the improvement of our urban governance capacity.

**A strong synergy of grassroots governance enabled by the Party's organizational strengths.**

The reform of swift responses to public complaints has shaped a work pattern of governance based on collaboration, in which grassroots Party organizations play a pivotal role and Party members and officials play a pioneering and exemplary role, under the guidance of the leaders at the city, district, and subdistrict levels of government. Building on the communications "nexus" comprised of subdistricts, towns, townships, and community Party organizations, after communities raise the alarm, departments at higher levels of government and regional administrations record the problem and work to find a solution. Thus, the reform is carried out across all levels of government.

**Public service enthusiasm among Party members and officials is boosted by the Party's close ties with the people.** Focusing on the "seven requirements" and "five needs", Party members and officials at all levels in Beijing are directly transforming public complaints into policy through the reform for swift responses to public complaints. Officials handle the affairs of the people and the government provides services to the people. The people sound the alarm, the government fixes the problem. In a swift and careful manner, the government puts its heart and soul into the efforts to remove the most pressing difficulties of the greatest concern to the people. In this way, the people know that their voice have been heard. This demonstrates that the government's view that people's satisfaction is the best political KPI.

**(I) "New practice" to enrich whole-process people's democracy**

**General Secretary Xi Jinping underlined that "first of all [we must] put the people in our hearts and uphold the Party's fundamental purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly".**

Taking the people's aspirations as our own, it is the Party's original aspiration and firm will

that we must always breathe the same air as the people, share the same future, and stay truly connected to them. It is only by upholding the people-centered philosophy of development and by sticking to the notion that development is for the people, depends on the people, and that its fruits should be shared by the people, that we can foster the right approach to development and modernization.

**Highlighting the principal status of the people.** The reform for swift responses to public complaints puts into practice the Party's original aspiration and founding mission. Over the past five years, this reform has always put the people first in line with the people-centered philosophy of development. Upholding whole-process people's democracy, this reform has highlighted the people's principal status, and fully protected their right to be informed, to be heard and to exercise and participate in oversight. Through this reform, the people can truly, participate in, benefit from, supervise, and help to create good governance. In this way, extensive, genuine and effective people's democracy has been manifested in a vivid and practical way, and whole-process people's democracy has taken root in a visible and tangible manner.

**Governance aimed at improving the quality of people's lives.**

"The CPC regards the successful handling of the affairs of the people and its ability to bring benefits to the people as the most important political achievement. Success is measured pragmatically by our ability to implement policy that is truly in the interests of the people", stated General Secretary Xi Jinping. The reform of swift responses to public complaints changes the past government-led approach over practical issues of public concern, and establishes the people-oriented approach to actively address problems and the needs of the people. In addition, a feedback mechanism based on response rates, the satisfaction rate and resolution rate has been built. By letting the people truly play a principal role in urban governance, they can jointly contribute to and benefit from urban development, while realizing the goals of people-centered government and community-level governance. It is widely recognized by the people that the "12345" hotline is indeed effective, and that it enables faster responses to complaints, faster resolutions for problems, and a higher level of refined urban management.

**(III) "New improvement" in grassroots governance capacity**

**"Work to modernizing the urban governance system and capacity is essential to the modernization of the national governance system and capacity,"** stated General Secretary Xi Jinping, adding **"during the 14th Five-Year Plan (FYP) period, we must step up efforts to improve the basic work and governance capacity at grassroots level"**. The work of the capital is of vital importance to the country. Building and managing the capital well is an important prerequisite for the successful modernization of the national governance system and capacity. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has made a series of important speeches on Beijing's work during multiple inspection tours in Beijing, setting out clear requirements for the urban governance of the capital.

**Greater government capacity to address difficulties.**

Focusing on key and thorny problems discovered during the implementation of the project for swift responses to public complaints, a responsibility research mechanism of has been formed under the one-issue-per-month mechanism for scenario-based governance. Two groups of the *One-Issue-per-Month Special List for Swift Responses to Public Complaints*, covering 310 duties involved in 25 problems, have been released to promote the optimization of the government responsibility system. In the process of responding to specific problems such as difficulties in

obtaining property ownership certificates and issues relating to garbage removal, the relationships between different levels of government and the responsibilities at different levels have been further clarified. This has facilitated the realization of "fast responses to community calls" at the grassroots level, and has given an operable and institutionalized guide for leading departments to strengthen coordination between the relevant departments in the problem-solving process.

**Simplified and efficient urban governance.** All districts and departments have continued to work on frequent problems and problem-prone areas, and conducted regular research into prominent and common problems. In the course of the reform for swift responses to public complaints, with proactive governance, a series of new mechanisms and approaches have been forged step by step to bring unprecedented change to our model of urban governance. A new pattern of urban governance led by Party committees and based on collaboration is taking shape. The level of good governance that is underpinned by a combination of the rule of law and the rule of virtue and supported by collaboration and technology, has been significantly improved. A sea change in mega-city governance driven by public needs has taken place, and a capital city-based paradigm of mega-city governance featuring swift responses to public complaints has been born.

**Governance focus shifted to the community level.**

**"The country will be strong and safe if communities are strong and safe. We must make a success of the basic work of modernizing grassroots governance", General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized.** The reform for swift responses to public complaints has been focused on the resolution of grassroots problems on the front line. By means of bold exploration and innovative practice, "a hotline to listen to public complaints" and "an assignment to fulfill duties" have effectively cracked the long-standing plague of resolutions being "within the sights but beyond the abilities of grassroots governance. With persistent concern for practical problems at the grassroots level of government, we have found clues and approaches which help us to resolve universal problems through specific cases. It is in such a way that the reform for swift responses to public complaints offers a step-by-step guide to upgrading targeted governance and refined services so that governance may become more proactive.

**(IV) "New drivers" to energize demand-driven urban governance**

**"The concerns of the people are what is always in my heart, and the aspirations of the people are my own aspirations too," said General Secretary Xi Jinping. "We must respond to the calls of the people", he concluded.** As a typical representative of urban governance, Beijing's reform for swift responses to public complaints has answered the call of the times. Its people-centered value orientation and practical pathway of refined governance embody the distinctive characteristics of the times. By demonstrating a new model for the modernization of mega-city governance, Beijing provides a model for the governance of China and contributes its wisdom and experience to the project of the modernization of national capacity and the national governance system.

**Innovative methods for mass work and staying engaged with the people.** The essence of work to satisfy the people's needs in "seven aspects" and "five areas" is the goal of providing more convenient and quality public services in a people-centered approach. In the reform for swift responses to public complaints, Party committees and governments at all levels and Party members and officials in Beijing have taken steps to advance the reform while focusing on the community level. Respecting the needs and opinions of the people, departments at higher levels of government pay attention to calls received by lower levels, and Party members and officials show



concern for the people. The work model featuring "three focuses, three responsibilities and three home services"® has been well received by the people. The reform has brought the Party and the government closer to the people, boosting a sense of duty among Party members and officials to serve the people and break new ground, and giving them even greater courage to assume responsibility.

**Greater government capacity and a demand-driven targeted service supply.** A first-class city should demonstrate the ability to govern well. In order to achieve a higher level of urban governance, attention should be paid to science-based, refined and intelligent governance. The reform for swift responses to public complaints propels the supply-side structural reform of government services. Noticing the pressing difficulties and problems of the greatest concern to the people, we have streamlined examination and approval procedures, simplified application documents, and shortened the processing periods. This effectively addresses the pain points and bottlenecks encountered by the people and enterprises through the deep integration of the reform for swift responses to public complaints with the reforms to delegate power, streamline administration, and optimize government services. Focusing on key and difficult problems of public concern, as well as on frequent problems and problem-prone areas, efforts for continuing to foster an innovative model of public service resource allocation oriented to the needs of the people and enterprise, which realizes the refinement and upgrade from "government supply" to "public demand" and guarantees the transition from one-size-fits approach to bespoke government. Public needs have become the driving force for profound changes in government services, and enabled the overall improvement in the capacity and quality of government's supply of public services.

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① Three focuses refer to focus on the front line, focus on the people, and focus on problems; three responsibilities refer to overall responsibility, community/village-level responsibility, and household-specific responsibility; three home services refer to home services to handle reasonable requests, dispel unreasonable complaints, and seek consultation and suggestions.

## **(V) A "New chapter" in improving the lives of the people**

**General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "the aspiration of the people to live a better life must always be the focus of our efforts," and that "the immutable aim of our modernization drive is to meet the people's aspirations for better lives."** The CPC is a party of the people and for the people. The central aim of the Party's governance is to handle affairs on behalf of the people and address matters that are of the greatest concern to the people. All the work of the Party is done in the interests of the people, and the cause of the Party is to seek happiness of the people.

### **Settling "important minor details" of concerns to the people.**

The goal of the mechanism for swift responses to public complaints is to resolve matters of great concern to the people. Relying on this mechanism, Beijing has significantly improved people's lives in recent years by resolving their concerns, in a surgical, case-by-case framework for resolving their complaints. It is through this reform that we have met the requirements of improving the level of urban governance, and enhancing quality of the lives of the people.

### **The resolution of difficult "matters of great importance" for urban governance.**

Under the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints, a livelihood database has been built

on the "12345" citizen service hotline to present livelihood issues in a real sense and accurately pinpoint gaps and pain points. The government has been urged to continue to perfect quality of life improvement policies, improve public services, and promote balanced urban development. We have kept working year by year to tackle one issue after another. By addressing inadequacies in government service, we have better satisfied the aspirations of the people for a better life, and created a more robust, solid, and sustainable sense of fulfillment, happiness and security among the people. The reform for swift responses to public complaints has gained a great deal of momentum and influence. It is not a superficial slogan, but a policy that has created a solid sense of fulfillment. It is a concrete and down-to-earth, heart-winning project, reads an online message from a member of the public.

#### **Manifested concrete results in efforts to enhance people's sense of people's well-being.**

Since the inception of the reform for swift responses to public complaints, the "12345" citizen service hotline has received more than 100 million requests from the public. The resolution rate and satisfaction rate have been 41 and 30 percentage points higher than before respectively. During the five years of reform, a number of convenience facilities such as supermarkets, parks and green areas have been built, and a group of issues such as elder care, child care and medical care have been addressed. The public have generally felt faster responses to their requests, with faster resolutions of problems and a higher level of refined urban management. This demonstrates that Beijing, as the capital city of a great nation has fulfilled its responsibility of serving and benefiting the people.

Reform is always an ongoing task that will never end. In the reform for swift responses to public complaints through Party building, there are also some long-standing or emerging problems that need to be addressed. For example, the supply of quality public services still falls short of the needs of the people, with large gaps between urban and rural areas. The urban governance system still needs to be improved, and the coordination between departments and local areas needs to be enhanced due to work differences and deficiencies across districts and departments. Data needs to be more integrated into the reform to enhance resilience and optimize platforms. Given that there is a tendency to wait until we are up our waists in public complaints before seeking a resolution, there is certainly still room for improvement with regard to work to proactively solve various frequent common problems before they become larger issues. Supporting policies, institutions and mechanisms need to be refined. The reform-centered governance mechanism in particular should be aligned and integrated with existing and newly established systems.

#### **IV. Suggestions and Outlook**

In the new journey of building a modern socialist country in all respects and advancing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts, we must act in the spirit of the 20th CPC National Congress under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. "Guided by the principle that cities should be built by the people and for the people, we will improve urban planning, construction and governance and move faster to change the development models of super-large and megacities," states the Report of the 20th CPC National Congress. Beijing's reform for swift responses to public complaints puts people first under the guidance of Party building to actively respond to the critical concerns of the people. The reform deepens with a greater number of channels for receiving complaints and feedback and for providing responses, and with ever more extensive participation. The reform provides a successful model for the modern mega-city governance by opening up a new road for building the city of the

people.

We will persist in the reform of swift responses to public complaints to properly address the concerns of the people and ensure better lives for the people. We will continue to deepen reforms and adjust systems to optimize governance, in a bid to make Beijing healthier and smarter, more comfortable and more resilient. We will remain active and seek to explore a super-large city governance system guided by Party building and driven by public demands, setting the capital model for the governance of China, inspiring innovative, and iconic concepts and more successful experiences in grassroots governance.

**- Upholding Party leadership, carrying forward the spirit of historical initiatives, and exploring a new way of modernizing Chinese-style mega-city governance**

Upholding the CPC leadership is the primary and fundamental guarantee of Chinese modernization. We must never waver in our efforts to uphold Party leadership to explore a new pathway and approach to modernizing Chinese-style mega-city governance.

**Upholding and strengthening the Party's overall leadership of urban governance.** Party organizations at all levels should play a leading core role in overall planning and coordination, to ensure that urban governance always produces high-quality development and the functional optimization of the capital city, to ensure that people form a mighty force with one heart and one mind for the benefit of all.

**Continuing to improve the Party's capacity to lead urban governance.** Taking the reform for swift responses to public complaints as a beginning, we will take the initiative to study the lessons of mega-city development in depth, and understand the demands and wishes of the people, comprehensively and accurately. We will effectively improve the Party's organizational system and the comprehensive competence of Party members and officials, and fully transform the strength of Party leadership into effective urban governance. Endeavoring to remain brave in our work, and to open up new pathways and new horizons for modernizing Chinese-style mega-city governance, we will work together with the people to meet their aspirations for better lives.

**- Deepening reform and innovation in a problem-oriented manner to further optimize the system and capacity of swift responses to public complaints**

We will further deepen the reform of swift responses to public complaints, and employing a surgical, deep-breakthrough methodology, we will redouble our efforts to address the challenges facing grassroots governance to improve the system and effectiveness of mega-city governance.

**Applying a problem-oriented approach to strengthening governance at the source.** We will improve the database operation mechanisms and algorithm capabilities, as well as our early warning capabilities, to provide the basis for the Municipal Government scientific decision-making, and to facilitate iterative updates of the reform for swift responses to public complaints. We will take advantage of the one-issue-per-month mechanism to advance proactive governance, and carry on with special governance campaigns at the same time. We will overcome the comprehensive challenges to urban governance in a proactive manner, and drive the overall improvement of urban governance capacity with key breakthroughs.

**Remaining committed to law-based governance, and pursuing a standardized and institutionalized system for swift responses to public complaints.** We will promote the implementation of the existing systems and ensure that responsibilities are fulfilled in accordance with the law, and keep these systems updated according to actual conditions. We will strive to build an efficient system featuring complete mechanisms, standardized procedures, and clear

standards in the reform for swift responses to public complaints. As such, the rule of law provides guarantee by consolidating foundation, stabilizing expectations, and generating long-term benefits.

**Insisting on scientific assessment to produce effects in a larger scope and at a deeper level.** We will carry out systematic planning and strategic research with the support of think-tank experts, and use the reform for swift responses to public complaints to push forward and break new ground in mega-city governance.

**- Strengthening comprehensive measures from a holistic perspective to create a stronger urban governance system and capacity**

We will act according to the people-centered ideology of development while sticking to the Party's mass line to promote public engagement in urban governance both online and offline. Driven by the reform for swift responses to public complaints, we will build a sound mass work system that listens to public opinions, gathers people's wisdom, and resolves their concerns.

**Building an effective hierarchical governance system underpinned by Party building.** We will strengthen coordination between different levels and departments and foster coordinated and efficient inter-governmental and hierarchical relationships featuring reciprocity of rights and responsibilities, clear boundaries and functional coupling. We will improve the framework of grassroots social governance led by Party organizations, implemented by village and community committees, and dominated by the people, and explore a three-dimensional pattern based on the collaboration of mass organizations led by Party and government systems.

**Improving governance capacity with an emphasis on finding solutions to frequent, common and complex problems.** We will carefully analyze the nature of frequent, common and complex problems, leverage external resources to tackle difficulties, and develop scientific response plans in advance, which combined with scenario-based governance mechanisms and pilots, will enhance the capabilities of our scientific decision-making and in-depth reforms.

**Recognizing the fundamental role of grassroots governance in pursuing more effective urban governance.** Grassroots governments embody the direct vital interests of the people. A number of problems find their origin at the grassroots level of government. Sticking to a grassroots-based approach, we will address the pain points and blockage points of grassroots governance by deepening reform at grassroots level, thus laying a solid foundation for the overall improvement of urban governance effectiveness.

**- Putting the people first, optimizing the supply of public services, and improving the living standards of the people**

Cities are built by the people, for the people. Putting the people first in urban governance ensures that governance serves the people, involves the people, and sees that the fruits of governance are shared by the people. Meeting the aspirations of the people for better lives is the immutable aim of all endeavors of governance.

**Perfecting the basic public service system for the people's well-being, with a focus placed on the pressing difficulties and problems that concern the people the most.** In view of unbalances and inadequacies in urban and rural development, we will make targeted efforts to support the basic needs of the people, especially in the "seven aspects" and "five areas". We will strengthen areas of weakness to promote an equitable distribution of basic public services and the continued improvement of living standards, and create a more robust sense of fulfillment, happiness and security among the people with high-quality development.

**Striving to foster a win-win model of administration in which social governance and**

**public services boost each other.** We will harmonize public services and social governance by forging new mechanisms that combine governance with services and reduce the pressure on governance to provide stronger public services. In order to assist enterprises which are facing difficulties and stabilize the economy and growth, we will promote the deep integration of the reform for swift responses to public complaints with reforms to delegate power, streamline administration and optimize government services, and redouble efforts to resolve painful and difficult livelihood issues.

**Developing whole-process people's democracy by fully mobilizing stakeholder enthusiasm in governance.** We will make use of new-type economic organizations, social organizations and mass organizations to broaden the channels for the people to express their demands and participate in governance. We will carry on work to address public complaints, optimize the work mechanism for online public opinions, and ensure that the mechanism of swift responses to public complaints paves the way toward the alleviation of challenges to people's livelihoods. Following the Fengqiao Model, we will fully stimulate the initiative of grassroots government and administrative creativity, and cultivate a spirit of self-service, self-supervision and self-governance among the people. In this way, the urban governance philosophies of "one for all and all for one" and "cities built by the people and for the people", can take root and bear fruit in Beijing.