



Politics Across the Hudson: The Tappan Zee Megaproject (Rivergate Regionals Collection)

Philip Mark Plotch

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The State of New York is now building one of the world's longest, widest, and most expensive bridges—the new Tappan Zee Bridge—stretching more than three miles across the Hudson River, approximately thirteen miles north of New York City. In *Politics Across the Hudson*, urban planner Philip Plotch offers a behind-the-scenes look at three decades of contentious planning and politics centered around this bridge. He reveals valuable lessons for those trying to tackle complex public policies while also confirming our worst fears about government dysfunction.

Drawing on his extensive experience planning megaprojects, interviews with more than a hundred key figures—including governors, agency heads, engineers, civic advocates, and business leaders—and extraordinary access to internal government records, Plotch tells a compelling story of high-stakes battles between powerful players in the public, private, and civic sectors. He reveals how state officials abandoned viable options, squandered hundreds of millions of dollars, forfeited more than three billion dollars in federal funds, and missed out on important opportunities. Faced with the public's unrealistic expectations, no one could identify a practical solution to a vexing problem, a dilemma that led three governors to study various alternatives rather than disappoint key constituencies.

Politics Across the Hudson continues where Robert Caro's *The Power Broker* left off and illuminates the power struggles involved in building New York's first major new bridge since the Robert Moses era. Plotch describes how one governor, Andrew Cuomo, shrewdly overcame the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of onerous environmental regulations, vehement community opposition, insufficient funding, interagency battles, and overly optimistic expectations.

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