

TOWN MEETING TO MAYORAL DECREE:
BUILDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING INTO THE LOCAL AGENDA

by
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE & NATIONAL HOUSING POLICY

A given municipality in the United States could embody any one of many governmental forms, or any variation from those forms that best fits its needs and goals. The mayor of one Springfield has vastly different responsibilities and powers than the mayor of another across the country, and this diversity of municipal arrangements leads to a wide range of approaches to local legislation. Many towns in New England have the unique Town Meeting system in place—essentially including up to 240 people in the decision-making process—resulting in a vastly different system for raising and resolving issues than in a city like Boston, Massachusetts, with an elected council as the governing legislative body.

These different methods of decision-making do not preclude varying forms of municipalities from dealing with the same issues, for every community has to think about providing basic social services, promoting its economic vitality, and preserving its physical and historical attributes to the best of its ability. No matter the municipality's form of government, the level of clarity and commitment with which these responsibilities are attended to can determine how well they are carried out; that is to say—a city or a town's methods largely dictate its products. Any locality can start a recycling program, but is there the basic citizen interest and governmental support to sustain it long-term? Perhaps there is great interest in revitalizing a downtown business district, but the legislative proposals are unclear and therefore draw opponents instead of backers from the private sector. It is this process—how a concern or a problem gains

enough recognition and backing to propel it to a legislative agenda and to policy-making stages—that are the primary focus of this research. Within this larger field of agenda building, this research further concentrates specifically on the concerns of affordable housing. This topic is both fascinating (because of its difficulty to be secured despite its obvious necessity), as well as exemplary of the myriad components of local governance that it takes to push a legitimate problem into practical fruition.

Twentieth century America bore witness to a broad span of federal domestic policy, from near-socialist involvement of government in the citizenry to a substantial separation of nation and state. And while this is true of social policy areas such as the former Welfare program, it is housing issues that range the greatest scale of support from government. With New Deal policies that attempted to rectify damages of the Great Depression, the creation of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the passage of the Federal Home Loan Bank Act of 1932 were steps towards helping people with mortgages and successful housing ownership in rough times. During the 1930s and on in the United States, local governmental structures were established to control low-income housing policies and similar community development regulations, taking the shape of housing authorities and other administrative agencies. Many of these structures were responsible for implementing public housing and other federal programs. Therefore, the efforts to provide affordable housing spanned governmental levels.

With the Housing Act of 1949, slum clearance and other urban renewal programs had good intent but largely negative consequences. As land was confiscated and re-used, many low-income families were displaced. Nevertheless, public housing endured, as it

seemed the best method for large-scale development of affordable housing. In 1974, the Nixon administration established a moratorium on subsidized multi-family mortgage insurance programs in place since 1965, but Congress ushered in another era with both The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and the Section 8 Housing Voucher—essentially a rental subsidy program. The former initiative placed a focus on revitalizing already existing neighborhoods and housing structures instead of long-term planning of entirely new ones. Over the course of almost 50 years (from the mid-1930s through the mid-1980s), the U.S. federal government tested out these housing assistance programs, and still people found themselves without affordable options. While many programs and policies faltered and received criticism—most notably public housing projects—it was still the assumed responsibility of the federal government to assay stable implementation of these domestic policies and seek out better overall solutions for affordable housing shortages.

However the face of United States domestic social policy—and in particular housing policy—was about to transform drastically. In his introductory chapter of “Shelter Burden: Local Politics and Progressive Housing Policy,” Edward G. Goetz aptly sums up the sharp change in U.S. federal housing policy—the floor dropped out from beneath nearly fifty years of federal assistance for housing low-income families—with the dawn of the Reagan administration, saying:

Federal budget authorization for low-income housing assistance programs fell by more than 80 percent between 1979 and 1988 when adjusted for inflation. What new initiatives were developed at the federal level in these years represented a reduction in the commitment to the production of low-income housing, a shallower subsidy in most forms of assistance, and a more limited support for

affordable housing. Housing assistance programs were cut more drastically than any other kind of domestic program.¹

While state and local governments made great efforts to remedy that 80 percent drop in federal program support, their endeavors were not actively promoted by (rather, requisite because of) federal policy changes. Starting with The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, the Reagan administration aimed to cut spending on domestic programs while increasing the nation's military budget, and they were successful in this shift of funds. Not only did HUD receive a dramatic blow in its portion of the federal budget, but also previously existing tax incentives for developers of low-income housing—available on a non-competitive basis to anyone who met the threshold eligibility criteria—were slashed or completely eradicated, only to be replaced by the less ideal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)—a tax credit that cannot support itself without the use of other public subsidies.² While previous tax credits were also inadequate, LIHTC was especially difficult because it was extremely complex, competitively allocated (meaning its resources were highly limited), was valued according to the fluctuating market-rate instead of on its own terms, and only had institutional investors (therefore sometimes lacking interest and support). Furthermore, private developers were being drawn into luxury building in the 1980s during a time when real estate values were on the rise and any affordable housing projects were primarily being kept in urban areas.³ The options and arenas for low-income building were limited thanks to the slashing of funds by the

¹ Edward G. Goetz, Shelter Burden: Local Politics and Progressive Housing Policy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 1.

² Goetz, 34.

³ John E. Davis, ed., The Affordable City: Toward a Third Sector Housing Policy (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 12.

Reagan administration's reformed federalism—the federal government dictating what states and municipalities must do based on what they themselves would not do.

These federal policy decisions made during the 1980s—which can be ascribed at least in part as a reaction to failed public housing of previous decades—resulted not in the total abandonment of low-income family assistance, but rather in the devolution of housing aid programs to the state and local levels of government. Since then, states, municipalities, and even smaller communities have tried to fend for themselves using whatever federal funds they can still secure, largely by creating new programs and partnerships that carry the torch of providing affordable housing to the low- and moderate-income brackets. From the increased community-based and nonprofit involvement to the expansion of incentive choices for private developers, low-income income housing has discovered solid ground to build upon at local levels of government. Cities have come up with all kinds of solutions to attempt to fill the gap that the federal government left, whether it meant investing municipal funds previously used elsewhere, reworking the distribution of CDBG monies so more goes to housing, or applying land-use and other regulations to take the financial burden off the government and rely more on for-profit developers.⁴ Goetz terms this the Local Housing Movement, and attributes the local regulatory support and program innovations to mobilized affordable housing activists. “Often these ideas began at the community level, initiated by local governments that were persuaded by the political and technical arguments of community-based advocates.”⁵ While housing scholars have both enumerated these creative local solutions as well as analyzed state and local housing policy in depth, the relationships

⁴ Goetz, 41.

⁵ Goetz, 41.

between public, private, and nonprofit sectors are at the heart of these community-based housing initiatives, and therefore require further investigation.

In the context of today's national budgetary and taxation decisions—strikingly comparable in many ways to that of the Reagan era—the state of Massachusetts is one of many where funding shortage has resulted in housing crisis. “Market rate” housing no longer matches the market, so that buyers cannot afford to buy and even the middle class owners are increasingly being squeezed out of their homes and neighborhoods.

Affordable housing for lower income people and families—ever a problem—has worsened with the hardening market forces, as people in higher income brackets are moving into mixed income housing that was originally intended for the lower brackets because the homes they would buy in better neighborhoods are too expensive. Again, much of the inventive uses of federal regulations and various housing programs that relieve these problems fall at the feet of state and local levels of government, and are greatly aided by partnerships forged across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Since states—even smaller ones like Massachusetts—vary so much from region to region, it is necessary to examine what is happening between the key players in the affordable housing arena at the level of cities and towns.

This research addresses housing policy at the municipal level of government, examining what kind of policies exist as a part of local law, and what strides are being made to remedy this affordable housing crisis. Specifically, this research hopes to show how housing policy is initiated, negotiated, and implemented within the processes of municipal government. By conducting interviews with people in both administrative and

elected governmental capacities, as well as people from the nongovernmental sectors, ideas will be revealed about why certain housing programs thrive and why others stagnate.

This research is confined to the local levels of government. Although federal and state policies may influence local decision-making, the life of a piece of local housing policy is largely determined by what is done, and by whom, in the municipality because there can be such variance between them. Therefore the initial research questions that this research asks are descriptive in nature, namely: What does the local level of government look like? Who are the actors from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors involved in policymaking and agenda building? More specifically, which actors from outside of government are concerned with housing issues, and what are the varying motivations and methods they have to accomplish their goals? These questions are important, as they establish the groundwork the study, giving shape to the explanations that follow.

Once it is clear who the involved participants are, it is necessary to look into their interactions with each other, and how (if at all) such interactions influence the actions they take. Is a piece of housing policy pushed through the political process by the force of nonprofit organizations alone, or with the aid of critical administrative departments or interested elected officials? Or are those roles reversed, with the nonprofits serving as auxiliary aids to policy that governmental actors wished to pursue in the first place on behalf of constituencies? There is reason to believe that, with all of the red tape that governmental departments and commissions wade through to be accountable and on top of basic public services, there is little room for creating new beneficial programs or

developments. However it is clear that interested nonprofits cannot drive these housing policies on their own. This research seeks to understand the balance of governmental and nongovernmental interest, time and resources invested in housing policies. Insofar as there are other actors brought into the issue along the way, it is also important to define their roles and why they became involved at the stages they did.

The significance of this body of research is, again, to give some attention to the formation of local affordable housing policies. If investigating the roots of these policies yields anything—from how they are formed, chosen, or even fully realized—then such queries might uncover a model for how an effective housing policy can be successfully implemented at the local level. More likely, however, is that this research will not unearth a single paradigm for effective municipal action but instead reveal the myriad ways that municipalities are dealing with the affordable housing shortage in Eastern Massachusetts. By doing so, the different programs and strategies can be compared and examined, not to decide that one paradigm is the best and only way to proceed, but to determine what a municipality's options are and perhaps to suggest steps in the right direction toward more affordable housing.

This analysis is achieved through the application of a municipal-level study called the Collaborative Cities Project. Consisting of two senior researchers and two associates who collected data in the field, this project sought to uncover some of the inner-workings of local-level government through interviews with both governmental and nongovernmental parties. A general investigation of processes and their participants, the Collaborative Cities Project gathered information about decision-making, agenda setting, issue initiation, and relationship characteristics through informal discussions with the

interviewees about their responsibilities, main concerns, and types of interactions with entities outside their own. This data allowed the Collaborative Cities research team to delve into the theory and the practice of each of eight municipalities in Eastern Massachusetts in 2005, exploring how different kinds of relationships promote or inhibit different kinds of policies. The specific research of this paper then focuses in further upon how affordable housing issues fit into this scheme of collaboration as a means to a legislative end.

CHAPTER 2 A REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

This research requires examination of two distinct areas of previous scholarship—first: how items get on a local agenda, and second: the background and current state of the Massachusetts housing crisis—as well as the overlap of these two areas. The former body of scholarship helps to provide a base for understanding the barriers and entrances to a legislative agenda, so as to discover why housing-specific policy does or does not successfully make its way onto and through such agendas. The latter body of scholarship—which ranges from general and national housing issues to more regional specific works—lays the groundwork both for what has been tried in local housing programming and what has been effective. Thinking about the plethora of governmental legislation that has been created on behalf of affordable housing in the U.S. leads this researcher to ask both what has worked and what can be done to bring those thriving programs to more cities and towns.

AGENDA BUILDING/POLICY-MAKING

Several books have been published over the last few decades containing definitions, observations, and correlations that are still pertinent to the agenda building that occurs today. Two foundations of any discussion about agendas and the policies they deal with are, first, the items on that agenda, and second, the participants involved in

forming it. Robert Eyestone aptly sums up these two major pillars of agenda creation in his 1978 book *From Social Issues to Public Policy*:

...the so-called public agenda contains a few items of high importance for which political action (or action of some other kind) is actively sought, and a longer, more stable list of endemic problems for which some long-term response would be welcomed, but not required politically by any specific deadline date... The public agenda is not the product of a single, unified public, either. There are, rather, many publics, each with its own priorities. Even on a single issue there may be identifiable and separable (politically separable—differing in class, role, or geography) issue publics, each contributing part of the total.⁶

In his terms, Eyestone lists items in two categories of importance that pertain to their urgency and applicability to the public at the time of its existence. As for participants, he recognizes the variance of and disparity between different groups for each agenda item. These two concepts have been addressed and reinvented over and over by the scholars reviewed here, but it is critical to highlight from the outset of this investigation how these agenda items come to be items in the first place.

The work of Cobb and Elder, titled *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building*, concerns itself with how demands become issues worthy of formal legislative treatment; that is, the process of how a social concern or problem becomes an item on a government's agenda. It commences with key questions that this research adopts, namely, "How is an agenda built (i.e. How does an issue gain access to it)? and Who participates in this process?"⁷ Early on, Cobb and Elder define two different kinds of agendas which this research will rely on: the *systemic* agenda—which is defined as general political problems that are considered important to the overall

⁶ Robert Eyestone, *From Social Issues to Public Policy* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1978), 86.

⁷ Roger W. Cobb and Charles D. Elder, *Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-building* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1972), 14.

public—and the *institutional* agenda—the formal scheduled items on which a government chooses to work.⁸ Cobb and Elder use case studies from various mid-century social movements analyzing the interaction of these two different “agendas,” both of which they find are necessary for an issue to thrive and get the attention of decision-makers.

By outlining four different models for approaches to agenda building, they are later able to explore issue access to those agendas. The first approach is *systems*, defining *demands* as what drives any sort of political decision-making and the conversion of those demands into *issues* as what propels the concerns of that demand onto an agenda. Cobb and Elder borrow from the thoughts of David Easton and express this process as “gatekeeping”—deeming it dictated by “those persons, institutions, and groups whose actions determine the success or failure of a demand or issue entering into the system.”⁹ Gatekeeping is almost like a screening process, where certain parties are responsible for the success or failure of an issue’s elevation to an agenda. The type of gatekeeper depends largely on the type of agenda item—that is, whether or not it is *old* (either a “habitual” or “recurrent” item) or *new* (either “spontaneous” as action/reaction to a demand or “channeled” by mobilized groups).¹⁰ A gatekeeper of a recurrent item could be, perhaps, a new agency administrator changing the regular processes: a gatekeeper of a spontaneous item could be a city councilor who is concerned with a constituent’s demand. This research accepts the assumption that the boundaries of the agenda—whoever is guarding them—are critical to understanding its creation, and will explore its own pertinent gatekeepers later.

⁸ Cobb and Elder, 14.

⁹ Cobb and Elder, 19.

¹⁰ Cobb and Elder, 88.

A second method for approaching agenda building places it in the context of *power*. Where power rests in a community largely influences what issues are considered for the agenda and controls in what terms they are defined. This leads to the third approach—*decision-making*—that considers the pressures of time, limited information, and the differences (or lack thereof) between issues that will affectively grab attention.¹¹ Just like the power approach, this is a fundamental building block to thinking about how an agenda is formed, for by considering the decision-makers, we consider what factors (such as definition or visibility of the issue) influence them.

Lastly, encompassing the first three agenda building approaches, is the *groups* approach. This builds on the basic idea that groups in a polity have different opinions, therefore generating controversy, demands, and issues that receive different amounts of attention depending in part on the characteristics and social circumstances of those groups. While concluding that “those groups that are the strongest in some sense will determine what issues are going to be discussed,”¹² Cobb and Elder also note that the decision-makers get tied into the conflicts and controversies, often acting as participants themselves. This broadens the scope of “groups,” and necessitates thinking about the political participants in a different light. In fact the *system* approach clusters participants in the decision-making process according to their roles as gatekeepers.

Beyond gatekeepers, another way to cluster participants is by defining issue initiators. Cobb and Elder posit that pairing any of the four initiator types—readjustors, exploiters, circumstantial reactors, and do-gooders—with a *trigger device*—i.e. changes

¹¹ Cobb and Elder, 30.

¹² Cobb and Elder, 34.

in society that garner attention or “trigger” conflict—sparks issue creation.¹³ In this scheme of categories of initiators, *readjustors* (most common) seek to put controversial resources in balance, *exploiters* create issues for their own gain, *reactors* responded to unexpected circumstances, and *do-gooders* take action to better society overall. The groups from the fourth approach model above could fall under any of these initiator categories depending on circumstance.

Even if there are prominent initiators, often it is the issue itself—its nature, characteristics, and relation to the public—rather than involved participants that sets the bottom line for its transformation into an agenda item. Cobb and Elder identify five qualities that determine the likelihood that an issue will rise to prominence on a political agenda: 1) degree of *specificity*, or the concreteness of the issue’s definition; 2) scope of *social significance*, considering the amount of resources invested or people affected in the issue; 3) extent of *temporal relevance*, measuring the staying-power of the issue’s implications; 4) degree of *complexity*, or how easy or difficult the issue is to understand; and lastly 5) degree of *categorical precedence*, considering if the issue has routine or irregular standing.¹⁴ These issue characteristics are critical to keep in mind when considering this research’s analysis later, for the definition of the issue according to this scheme largely determines what kind of attention it will receive.

This emphasis on defining the issues can be carried a step further in light of the Collaborative Cities Project. Jeffrey Berry, in his book *The New Liberalism*, offers a different framework for defining issues by tracing the influence of citizen groups in the context of materialism and postmaterialism rather than strictly liberal or conservative.

¹³ Cobb and Elder, 83-5.

¹⁴ Cobb and Elder, 96-102. Italicized terms are directly borrowed from their work.

By examining three sessions of Congress—in 1963, 1979, and 1991—Berry follows trends and changes in issues taken up by the legislature and discusses how interest groups are involved in these agenda and policy decisions. Interest group scholars have always put the business sector at the focus of their research, and therefore material values as well—placing a premium on wealth as the key unlocking doors of security and stability. Postmaterialist groups, on the other hand, opt for a “trade-off of economic growth,” focusing on general rights—whether they be environmental, consumerist, or civil.¹⁵ It stands to reason that there are other methods of generally defining issues that are potentially related to agenda items, so the question “Why Materialism as the theoretical framework?” does jump out.

Berry has this very conversation, first stating that, “‘Postmaterialism’ is an abstraction, a concept that political scientists find useful to describe evolving trends in advanced industrialized democracies. Yet it has no meaning in the real world of politics.”¹⁶ He goes on to offer, however: “The most direct answer is that what makes the theory of Postmaterialism so valuable is that it challenges our common notions of liberal and conservative.”¹⁷ Agency administrators and interest groups alike can be either liberal or conservative and still be concerned about the postmaterial quality-of-life issues. By using this terminology in later analysis of the Collaborative Cities dataset, an angle that treats the issue at its core values rather than its political standing is discovered, and is useful in exploring what forces are at work when an agenda is set. Berry notes that despite the fact that scholars disagree to what degree, “Agenda building is a major

¹⁵ Jeffrey M. Berry, The New Liberalism: The Rising Power of Citizen Groups (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 5.

¹⁶ Berry, 48.

¹⁷ Berry, 49.

component of interest group advocacy.”¹⁸ Within the realm of this research, it is unnecessary to enumerate the different lobbying strategies and tactics for garnering issue attention that Berry discusses. This *how* of the advocacy does not dominate the conversation as much as the *why*. Why are some groups or issue participants more effective than others? By establishing that the material/postmaterial context is a good one for this research, we are given a way to look at the varying influence of nongovernmental groups by these issue values. The Collaborative Cities project tries to measure within its own results which kind of relationships lead to which kind of agenda items and policy outcomes.

Another author who explores this question of why some issues are successful in navigating an agenda and others are not is John W. Kingdon. In his updated second edition, Kingdon supplements his notable *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* with an additional chapter exploring policies from the late 80s and early 90s. Relying on four national-level case studies (concerning health and transportation issues) as his primary methodology, Kingdon seeks to define and explore a set of processes that comprise policymaking, which includes agenda setting and a subcategory he calls alternative specification¹⁹. According to his scheme, a subject makes it to an agenda or an alternative (another option for governmental action closely related to an agenda item) to the top of its pack either because of the participants or the processes they are involved in. He spends a chapter apiece documenting both the importance and the resources of participants inside of government and then outside of government, noting that no one grouping of participants fully leads any one process. However after cataloguing each

¹⁸ Berry, 62-3.

¹⁹ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* 2nd ed., (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995), 4.

policy participant's strengths and weaknesses, Kingdon does conclude that it is elected officials and interest groups that most dominate governmental agendas and implementing changes to those agendas, respectively. In fact it is salient to this research's discussion of nongovernmental entities to consider the role that Kingdon asserts is theirs:

Because they are often concerned with protecting current benefits and prerogatives, they affect the governmental agenda more by blocking potential items than by promoting them. Rather than structuring a governmental agenda, interest groups often try to insert their preferred alternatives into a discussion once the agenda is already set by some other process or participant.²⁰

This argument that nongovernmental groups act as deterrents instead of facilitators of agenda items is bold, and will be explored in later analysis of issue initiation and collaboration between government and nongovernmental entities.

Another way that Kingdon divides up participants into groups is not by governmental status but by presence in the public. He titles these groups: *visible* and *hidden clusters*, characterized by the amount (or lack thereof) of media attention that a participant gets. In most cases, prominent elected officials and members of Congress would be considered visible, while issue specialists and many interest groups would be deemed hidden.²¹ While none of the groups fall exclusively in one of these categories, Kingdon does describe them in relation to each other as follows: "So the visible participants try to affect agendas, and then they turn to specialists in the less visible policy community like bureaucrats, staffers, researchers, and interest groups for the alternatives from which an authoritative choice can be made."²² This is a cohesive way of viewing how participants of all kinds are involved in policy making, and perhaps are

²⁰ Kingdon, 67.

²¹ Kingdon, 68.

²² Kingdon, 70.

more responsible for different “streams” of the processes. Indeed Kingdon views these agenda processes in a more fluid way than regimented 1-2-3 steps, breaking it down roughly into three groups—problem recognition, proposal formation, and politics.²³

While basic, Kingdon importantly distinguishes between *conditions* and *problems* (similar to what Cobb and Elder termed *demands* and *issues*)—and the circumstances in which the former becomes the latter—and next notes how an agenda item attached to a problem is much more likely to rise and stick as pertinent and well addressed policy.²⁴ Kingdon highlights particularly the importance of public political opinion and elections in affecting agenda setting.

Overall, Kingdon’s work illustrates the changeable roles of different political participants in the process of agenda setting, an important factor in this research by making aggressive assertions and providing terminology. Indeed, the Collaborative Cities Project, although not a longitudinal study, used a methodology similar to that of Kingdon, who conducted a series of interviews over several years with governmental and nongovernmental people who were all invested in Congressional decision-making. While Kingdon’s work ultimately focuses too much on the federal level for this particular research, it still provides a strong grounding for many useful concepts here.

Once again at the national level, a formal way of viewing agenda setting is again by defining it in terms of policy. As James Anderson states in his book *Public Policy-making*, “a useful concept of policy [is]: a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern.”²⁵ It is these actors and matters of concern that Anderson’s work seeks to delineate. He first touches on the

²³ Kingdon, 197.

²⁴ Kingdon, 198.

²⁵ James E. Anderson, *Public Policy-Making* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), 3.

classical theories of decision-making that all policy scholars use: the rational-comprehensive and incremental theories, which oppose each other in terms of the discrepancies between problems and the alternatives that are available and worth considering.²⁶ In the former, a determination is made of the best decision and its ordered alternatives, whereas in the latter there is no one “right” decision. These theories for decision-makers are relevant in the context of the actors Anderson outlines in his second chapter. He divides up all participants as “official” and unofficial,” sticking all governmental positions in the former category and interest groups (among others) in the latter category. These participants, he notes, are not equally involved and visible across the board for every issue. Sometimes—as with the findings of Cobb and Elder—the status of an issue in its quest for agenda placement is outside the control of the participants, and instead depends on other factors related to the issue itself, such as social circumstance or media attention.²⁷ From a coal mining emergency to pollution control, Anderson explores the different types of issues that make their way onto an agenda, ultimately concluding that there are many different roads—whether spontaneous or channeled, to borrow from Cobb and Elder—that lead to the agenda. He goes on to discuss decision criteria, various strategies for decision-making, and the implementation of policy that has made it through the agenda process. While the research of this paper is more concerned with how the issues become agenda items—whether because of the actions of the participants or the components of the issues themselves—Anderson’s work does inform the larger picture and the life of public policy.

²⁶ Anderson, 10-3.

²⁷ Anderson, 61-2.

This previous scholarship provides the nuts and bolts for this research, for the participants and issues of the Collaborative Cities Project can now be framed with these perspectives. While most of these scholars looked at agenda setting and policy-making at the national level in their case studies and other various methodologies, the definitions they set for agendas, issue characteristics, and participants are applicable on the local level and therefore useful for the municipal studies of this research coming from the Collaborative Cities Project. Cobb and Elder—in distinguishing between different kinds of agendas—provide the definition of an *institutional agenda* as the formal kind that this research refers to. Also they differentiate between *old* and *new* agenda items, which in part determine the kind of attention they receive and from whom. Kingdon purports the idea that nongovernmental groups are active more to block an agenda item than to promote it, which almost contradicts some of the assumptions about positive interest group activity in the Collaborative Cities Project. Kingdon's *Alternative specification* is less a topic of this research, but important to keep in mind as some of the subjects of the study might display these considerations and decisions. As for issue characteristics, Berry's examination of material and postmaterial issues in Congressional sessions can be applied to this research, insofar as issue types are later classified in these terms. And as for participants, Cobb and Elder's discussion of initiators and gatekeepers greatly serve the analysis of the Collaborative Cities dataset. Since most of literature reviewed here worked at the national and federal levels, the investigation of previous housing-specific scholarship to follow, an effort is made to bring some focus to the local and municipal levels of these processes.

HOUSING ISSUES: FROM NATIONAL TO MUNICIPAL

Even though this research is focusing on the local level, it is necessary to know what federal policies are in place and how they affect the states and municipalities across the country. The Urban Institute provides a general examination of the recent housing market and corresponding policies in a primer published in 2003. In it, such housing policy is looked at through the lens of Economics, which is not always useful to this research; however their discussion of “affordability” and the bottom of the market are helpful in setting some guidelines. First, the term “affordability” is addressed, using the same definition that HUD does: if a household is spending more than 30% of their income on housing, then that housing is not affordable for that household. Affordability, and where the “bottom” of the market lies, can be relative depending on the conceiver’s values; however, housing is a societal and human necessity, and therefore some kind of numerical cutoff (like 30%) is reasonable to accept. While many scholars and housing experts see a decline in national affordability in this country, the National Association of Realtors’ (NAR) housing affordability index has been steadily rising from its all-time low in the early 1980s,²⁸ meaning according to instruments of the market, housing has become more affordable in the last twenty years. This problem is particularly bad in the renters’ market, and for moving into the owner’s market, as Green and Malpezzi display in a study comparing the two. They find that, for most states, those at the median of the renters’ market could afford the principal, interest, and property taxes on a home in the 25th percentile, indicating that that middle of the rental market can afford to own a home in the lower quadrant of the market. However, at the lower end of the renters’ income

²⁸ Richard K. Green and Stephen Malpezzi, *A Primer on U.S. Housing Markets and Housing Policy* (Washington D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 2003), 136.

spectrum, they found that in 23 states, a renter at the 25th percentile would have to pay over 30% of their household income to afford a home at the 25th percentile. In other words, the renters' and owners' markets do not match percentile to percentile, and our standard definition of affordability is very strained at the lower-income renters level.²⁹

This is, in part, because of the improvements in the quality of most low-income housing since the national condemnation of much of the public housing quality by the 1970s. The contemporary units are better, safer, cleaner, although far more costly. The cost of the good went up as the good improved, but in this case, as noted before, housing is a necessity and a certain quality should be maintained for all income levels. Even as the amount of existing cheap (presumably worse-quality) and unassisted housing declined through the 1980s, the amount of subsidized and higher quality units did not rise enough to offset the balance of affordability.³⁰ That is to say, government subsidies that are depended upon to make up for the decline in cheap housing are not great enough. While many experts' claim that the bottom of the housing market has dropped out and that the low end is difficult to identify, Green and Malpezzi use three indicators—prices, production, and vacancy rates—to assert that the bottom of the market is healthy overall as long as local regulations restricting land use for affordable building are not imposed.³¹ It is then that “low-cost” housing becomes less affordable, as well has less desirable to create and harder to find, showing that within the national scheme of affordable housing, there is an intrinsic tie to and built-in control by what occurs at the local level.

As reviewed before, this was not always the case, as historically housing affordability was not the concern of any governmental body, let alone local ones.

²⁹ Green and Malpezzi, 139 (the referred study is fully described).

³⁰ Green and Malpezzi, 157.

³¹ Green and Malpezzi, 162.

Housing in the U.S. was mostly a function of the private sector before the Great Depression, and even as it moved into the realm of public responsibility, it primarily took the shape of first land-use and construction regulations, and later slum clearance of the 1930s to the 1960s. In their thorough book titled *Housing and Local Government* (a part of the Municipal Management Series produced by the International City Management Association), Mary K. Nenno and Paul C. Brophy cite the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, which in turn begat the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the corresponding Housing Assistance Plan (HAP), as the genesis of true local involvement in housing. These were preceded by smaller steps, like The 1949 Housing Act which linked federal funding for slum clearance and public housing projects to municipal planning, initiating cooperation agreements for public housing. After noting the lofty and perhaps over-ambitious attempts of the 1966 Model Cities Program, Nenno and Brophy link the Model Cities' main goal of melding economic, physical, and social assistance into one program as a forerunner of the 1974 Act.³² The CDBGs and the required HAP—which was a plan that the government had to prepare before receiving development assistance—brought the local governments into the planning, review, and general recording stages of the state of their local housing stock, and inevitably invested them in the stakes of these housing developments. These changing roles and attitudes within government led to genuine creativity in local strategies and solutions for housing problems. While these vary from virtually every municipality to municipality, Nenno and Brophy define the (relatively) new-found involvement of local government in housing issues in terms of, “Three clusters of

³² Mary K. Nenno and Paul C. Brophy, *Housing and Local Government* (Washington D.C.: International City Management Association, 1982), 32-3.

housing responsibility: Conserving and rehabilitating existing housing and neighborhoods; Developing and managing assisted housing; and Responding to the impact of housing dynamics” (i.e.—react well to changes in market).³³ More and more, localities are assuming more integrated and comprehensive responsibilities where housing is concerned, following the legacy of the Model Cities Program and the influence of the 1974 Act. Nenno and Brophy suggest that these cities, in light of these responsibilities they assume, need “to develop new relationships with the private institutions, nonprofit organizations, and citizen groups that perform important housing tasks,”³⁴ among other things. Forging these types of relationships, which has definitely occurred since this book was published in the early 1980s, is critical to this research and the Collaborative Cities Project.

Nenno, in her later book *Ending the Stalemate: Moving Housing and Urban Development into the Mainstream of America’s Future*, further emphasizes the importance of tying housing to community development as a crucial step in bringing local government into the housing mix. She extensively reviews HUD’s policies throughout the past 40 years, answers descriptive questions about the evolution of local housing programs, and explores a new approach by asking what it is that gets affordable housing issues the attention they deserve. In a more recent exploration than in *Housing and Local Government*, Nenno is able to speak with some hindsight about The Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) under the 1990 National Affordable Housing Act, and compare CHAS to its predecessor HAP. Of these two strategies for how to get local government involved with their own housing and its

³³ Nenno and Brophy, 41.

³⁴ Nenno and Brophy, 182.

funding, Nenno concludes that CHAS is a revised and more realistic version of HAP, better able to work within the parameters it sets for itself.³⁵ While both require that the government evaluate “the housing needs of low- and moderate-income families” and analyze “the size, affordability, and condition of the existing housing stock,”³⁶ the HAP was far more extensive in what it required of local governments, even if the CHAS rigorously challenged municipalities, too. This is to say that the federal attention to the housing problems of the U.S. definitely emphasizes decentralization of responsibility, but is not blind to changing needs and adjusting its own regulations and plans to make local implementation more successful. While Nenno’s research methods are more a review than forging new theories, the results of her survey of over 50 years leads to policy suggestions, e.g. reinvestment in HUD and the creation of a new national commission that would structure housing policies and allow for the integration of municipal programs with federal ones.

With federal regulations like the Section 8 voucher system in 1978 or LIHTC of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, the state and local levels of government have boundaries to work within in creating their own responses to affordable housing issues. Prepared under a grant from the Urban Land Institute, Michael A. Stegman and J. David Holden are the primary authors of a volume titled, *Nonfederal Housing Programs: How States and Localities are Responding to Federal Cutbacks in Low-Income Housing*, dealing with these very options at the nonfederal levels. Many choose to implement inclusionary zoning or linkage programs to insure that affordability will be considered by developers and not eclipsed by the financial benefits of market-rate housing. Building and

³⁵ Mary K. Nenno, *Ending the Stalemate: Moving Housing and Urban Development into the Mainstream of America’s Future* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1996), 229.

³⁶ Nenno, 229.

maintaining relationships between the government and the nongovernmental sectors involved in housing is one of the most effective ways both to stimulate and continue affordability in development. For instance, a well-known 1986 mandatory linkage program in Boston directed developers to make payments towards affordable projects if they wanted flexibility with zoning for other (presumably market-rate or business-related) development.³⁷ There are all different kinds of programs that state or local levels choose to implement given their particular affordability needs, socioeconomic landscape, etc.

These commitments to Public/Private Partnerships are explored later by Stegman and Holden. They outline various examples of such partnerships that promote low-income programs in collaborative ways, noting that there are both *project-based partnerships*—those that are formed around a particular project and dissolve when it collapses or is completed—and *program-based partnerships*—those that work to formalize the relationship of the participants already involved in a development.³⁸ The former Public/Private Partnerships are unique in their strengths, for between the two sectors they can offer: 1) management and conversion of declining/abandoned into affordable/useable housing; 2) mobilized community *and* governmental resources; and 3) technical expertise to community-based organizations who could use the training or guidance in housing development or management.³⁹ For instance in 1983, Boston launched a plan called the Boston Housing Partnership formed under the Goals for Boston Committee that forged a partnership between the city, major financial institutions, foundations, and community-based groups. A large-scale project with the goal of

³⁷ Michael A. Stegman and J. David Holden, Nonfederal Housing Programs: How States and Localities are Responding to Federal Cutbacks in Low-Income Housing (Washington D.C.: Urban Land Institute, 1987), 62.

³⁸ Stegman and Holden, 101-03.

³⁹ Stegman and Holden, 101.

rehabilitating 701 apartments in 10 different neighborhoods (with an average budget of \$51,000 per unit), this project was ambitious in scope and structure. Its complex weaving of different sectors is worth noting in the context of this research, however, because even if the Collaborative Cities Project does not encounter anything on the same scale, the idea of these partnerships is still pertinent to the conversation which explores the relationships and interactions between public, private, and nonprofit interests.

By the 1990s, there was an established local housing movement, and it was no surprise that the nonfederal levels of government were either saddled with or assuming the responsibilities of affordable housing demands. As a part of this movement, the groups that emerged as participants span the various sectors, just as with the partnerships in the various programs just reviewed. Edward Goetz's *Shelter Burden: Local Politics and Progressive Housing Policy* seeks to describe the phenomenon of the local housing movement, and then to explore how housing policies have become progressive in their need for economic restructuring and invigorated efforts. Within this investigation of the local housing movement, Goetz highlights the presence of housing advocacy coalitions—the groups that mobilized upon recognizing “that housing policymaking had indeed devolved to local governments and that low-income advocates needed to organize locally to influence that process.”⁴⁰ Goetz does well to note that in some cases—for instance, Massachusetts in the early 1980s—the government had already set aside housing monies that in turn spawned groups to form and influence the flow of those resources.⁴¹ But this formation of groups around either the responsibility or the funding for affordable housing purposes does not preclude any one sector from being a part of these coalitions. In a

⁴⁰ Goetz, 54.

⁴¹ Goetz, 54.

survey of U.S. cities, 60.3% of these low-income housing advocacy groups were said to be “umbrella organizations” of local groups, while 9% of coalitions were said to be government-sponsored groups (whether advisory committees or governmental commissions).⁴² This is evidence that the interested parties can come from anywhere, including the private, public, and nonprofit sectors.

Goetz rightfully incorporates community development corporations (CDCs)—locally based nonprofit entities that seek to revitalize low and moderate housing options in the community—into this conversation about the components of the local housing movement, for they can act as advocacy groups, too, depending on the city (and the amount of its affordable housing awareness). CDCs are not only advocates but developers and managers of affordable projects, as well, and Goetz terms this reliance upon nonprofit services to ensure consistent affordable housing stock a “progressive” approach. From a national study of CDCs in 1989 (with an average age of twelve years), Goetz found that “the CDC sector has developed a production capacity roughly equal to the federal government’s low income housing output.”⁴³ When members of the nonprofit sector is producing as much as HUD is able to, it is clear how integral the CDC presence has become to affordable housing issues. To exemplify their growing critical role at the local level, Goetz uses Los Angeles as a model to study and test his theories of how the push for affordable housing has changed from a federally-driven to local level movement. His findings steer him towards the conclusion that a cooperative relationship is most effective—one where the efforts and expertise of local interested parties combine with local government and utilize the needed resources from state and federal levels.

⁴² Goetz, 57-8.

⁴³ Goetz, 118.

From the term “Progressive” housing policy we move on to a related term—one that accounts not so much for the involved participants but for the type and longevity of the affordable housing. John Emmeus Davis, who edited the compilation called *The Affordable City: Toward a Third Sector Housing Policy*, promotes the idea of “Social” or “Third Sector” housing to describe housing developed with the goal of *perpetuation* of affordability. Equally as important as its inception, says Davis, the perpetuation of affordability in housing projects (beyond the time constraints of market changes) extends beyond nonprofit-sponsored housing, having the defining characteristics of, “privately owned, socially oriented, and price-restricted” housing developments.⁴⁴ Such nonprofit-sponsored developments are privately owned but would not serve to profit the owners—with the added stipulation that there is a limit placed on the future price of the development so as to keep it affordable; hence these projects are also considered non-market. Davis argues that municipalities should work towards creation of this Third Sector Housing for various reasons, including: the failure of past programs, the scarcity of resources with no foreseeable relief, the assurance given to public investors in the wake of retreating private ones, and the “allure of homeownership” for a government official to offer his/her lower-income constituents.⁴⁵ In exploring the options available to work towards this Third Sector housing, Davis notes that there are perhaps as many housing models as there are housing problems. In his own chapter called, “Beyond the Market State: The Diverse Domain of Social Housing,” Davis defines six models of housing on a continuum,⁴⁶ laying out an evaluation for the affordability of each such that

⁴⁴ Davis, 5-6.

⁴⁵ Davis, 9-14.

⁴⁶ The continuum, ranging from Owner-occupied to Tenant-occupied Housing, spans the possibilities of ownership(s) and legal mechanisms it operates under. Davis’ models are: Deed-Restricted, Community

one (or any combination of them) could be applied to the needs of a given locality. He does not point to any one as superior to the others, instead noting that the models can act as *compatible* or *complementary* to each other.⁴⁷ This model of Social or Third Sector Housing, with its characteristics of private, nonmarket developments, is one of many ways that scholars propose to advance the capacities of local governments in dealing with affordability of housing.

In sum, in the past half century there has been thorough research conducted on both the agenda-building process and the affordable housing policies. However only recently have scholars been recognizing the importance of local level programs and interactions in creating viable housing solutions. This research continues that focus almost exclusively on the municipal level, which is substantiated by and grounded in the Collaborative Cities Project of 2005. The eight municipalities in Eastern Massachusetts from that study have, therefore, become a case study for local housing policy. With a concentration on how the interactions between governmental and nongovernmental actors propel housing policy through the legislative process, this research seeks to further highlight the importance of the local governmental process, especially to housing issues, and note the innovative ways that the processes can continually be improved. Many case studies that have been conducted by previous scholars have employed similar strategies as this research team's methods, using In-person elite interviewing and later quantifying that narrative information using a series of variables. Nevertheless, the methodology for the Collaborative Cities Project helps to set this research apart from other work in the field, as it includes its own distinct process of municipality and subject selection.

Land Trust, Limited Equity Condo, Limited Equity Coop, Mutual Housing Association, and Nonprofit Rental Housing.

⁴⁷ Davis, 95.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY OF THE COLLABORATIVE CITIES PROJECT OF 2005⁴⁸

City selection for inclusion in the Collaborative City research study was based on demographic data, city distance to the research center in Medford, Massachusetts at the Tufts University Campus, and the researchers' knowledge of the cities' governments in the area based on their past experiences. Initially, Clarence Stone's typology⁴⁹ for categorizing cities was proposed. Stone groups cities into four different governing regime types. However, when the list of potential cities was grouped based on Stone's typology, it was found that the cities fell into only two or three of the categories. Accordingly, the research team decided that using economic data was the best method for categorizing the cities for the initial selection. Further categorizations based on different lines based on the research could always be done from other factors and variables in the research.

In the spring of 2005, Dr. Kent Portney and field researcher Robin Liss applied for a Tufts University grant to conduct research over the summer. Their application was approved, and that grant was supplemented by funding from The Richard Skuse chair and the Tufts Political Science Department. These sources of financial support enabled two field researchers to work full time during the summer of 2005 on the Collaborative City research study.

The initial list of cities included all cities and towns with a significant population within one hour's drive of Medford. While there was the possibility of including cities in Northern New Hampshire such as Nashua, it was decided that the state should be kept constant, with all test cities in Massachusetts, in order to avoid introducing an extra

⁴⁸ This methodological section is co-authored by Robin Liss and Jessica Simoncelli.

⁴⁹ Stone, Clarence...essay about Urban Regime Models

variable. Keeping the state constant does characterize all of the test cities with an element of bias that is not controlled if this were expanded to a comparison of municipalities across the country, which could result in conclusions that are highly dependent on that constant. However, keeping all the cities in the same state also allowed for concentration on the differences between the cities, the differences in their demographics, city government structure, and ultimately the interest groups without including a secondary study of varying state governments and their impact on collaboration between cities and interest groups. While a study of state influence on city government and local group interaction would certainly be interesting, it was beyond the scope or abilities of these researchers given time and budget constraints.

The initial list of twelve cities included Worcester, Lynn, Somerville, Salem, Gloucester, Cambridge, Watertown, Arlington, Natick, Newton, Brookline and Boston. All are cities located in Eastern Massachusetts, within an hour's drive of Medford, MA. The smallest three cities, Gloucester, Watertown and Natick, because of their small size, were dropped from the list of potential cities, each with a population just over 30,000⁵⁰. The next smallest city is Salem, with a population of 40,407⁵¹. While Salem is close to Arlington in population, as the study had a hard limit of eight cities due to time constraints, a line had to be drawn and therefore Salem, too, was excluded on the basis of its size. Additionally, Arlington was included over Salem because of its close proximity to the research center.

The remaining eight cities—which ultimately were used as the case cities—were distributed fairly evenly on the second method of selection: median family income. At the

⁵⁰ 2000 U.S. Census

⁵¹ 2000 U.S. Census

higher end, with a median family income of \$105,289 and \$92,993 are Newton and Brookline, respectively. At the lower end, with a median family income of \$42,988 and \$45,295, respectively are Worcester and Lynn. Somerville, Cambridge and Arlington fall in the middle with a median family income of \$51,243, \$59,423 and \$78,741, respectively. Although the median income of Boston is \$44,015—placing it on the lower end of the distribution among the cities—the Boston population is broken into many groups that vary greatly in their incomes. For this reason, and because of its large size and diversified population, Boston does not have the same economic homogeneity of the other selected cities.

The final list of eight cities provided the research team with a diverse group to examine, from Boston and Worcester—which are very large cities—to the smaller communities of Arlington and Brookline. More importantly, the city list provided a wide economic distribution among the cities. All of the cities are easily accessible by car from Medford, with Worcester being the most difficult because of its distance.

Subjects were split into three types: elected officials, city administrators and outside groups. Outside groups were considered any groups including nonprofits, business interests, labor unions, political groups or any organization of individuals outside of the government. The division into the three group types fell along the natural line of those in power—including the elected officials and city administrators—and those trying to influence or benefit from the government. Initially, mayors were left out of the research design because of the variety in their roles depending on city structure. However, when it was discovered that some important data could be gathered from mayors, they were then included in the process.

In-person elite interviewing using open-ended questions was selected as the best method for gathering data. The senior researchers working on this project had previously been involved in numerous studies interviewing both city officials and interest groups. Those studies utilized a variety of data-gathering methods including written mail surveys, phone interviews and in-person interviews⁵². It was determined that—because of the close proximity to the interview subjects—in-person interviews were not only feasible, but also the method that would result in the best data. While in-person interviews were used for city councilors and city administrators, phone interviews were used for interest groups. This choice was made purely on the basis of logistics. Because many of the interest group subjects did not even have an office, it was decided that those subjects would generally be most comfortable with a phone interview. The aim was to speak to the head representative of each group, but often it only consisted of one or a handful of members. From Executive Directors to founding members, the group interviews that were actually included in the dataset were those that talked to members in the highest position possible. Additionally, because it was expected that there would be more group respondents than administrators and city councilors, using a phone interview method would enable the researchers to interview the largest number of these subjects.

Three similar questionnaires tailored for each group were designed. Each questionnaire included eight to ten questions. All of the questions were open-ended and designed to elicit data without cuing the interviewees to the nature of the investigation or prompting specific answers. The opening question gave the subjects an opportunity to

⁵² James M. Carlson and Mark S. Hyde, Doing Empirical Political Research (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003), 240-4.

describe themselves and how they got to their current position. This question was designed both for background information and to ease the subjects into the interview.

Many of the questions included follow-up probing for specific data. The questions were branched to provide a customized interview that was still standardized between subjects. Beyond the branching, the interviewers were both permitted and encouraged to spontaneously probe as they saw fit in order to focus a subject's response on the question. However, this improvising was intended to be pointed and brief, and conducted without leading the subject on to the purpose of the study. As the interview progressed, the questions became more specific and concentrated particularly on collaboration. The questionnaires were designed with a rolling subject selection process in mind for the group category. In other words, those questions that talked about collaboration were followed up with specific questions about which groups or government officials the individual collaborated with.

The City Councilor questionnaire, which was used for all forms of councils including Board of Aldermen and Board of Selectmen, was the first questionnaire designed. The other questionnaires were derived from this initial Council questionnaire. Similar to the other two interview forms, the Councilor interview began with a question inquiring about the subject's background and how he/she ended up on the city council. To direct the subject to his most recent work, the second question asked about the issue he had been spending the most time on in the past month. The third question began to dig into the groups that were involved with the issue in question two. The fourth question inquired about their first election and any groups that might have been involved. The fifth question inquired more generally about what groups the subject heard from most often.

The sixth question asked about environmental issues and groups involved, which was placed on the questionnaire specifically for research in Dr. Portney's area of interest. The seventh and eighth questions asked about groups that worked with the councilor's colleagues and any groups that were adversarial to the interests of the councilor.

The administrator questionnaire was very similar to the City Councilor questionnaire. There was a question inquiring about the number of Full Time Equivalents the administrator had working in his office. The questions were rephrased to be more appropriate for the administrators, but were designed to be linked to the councilor questions as much as possible. The interest group questionnaire was designed with consideration for the phone-based nature of the interviews. This third set also inquired about the group's interactions with both the city councilors and the city administrators. Each questionnaire form had one to two questions per page, to give space for writing answers.

Following the completion of the design of the three interview questionnaires, the study was submitted for approval from the Tufts Internal Review Board (IRB). The IRB exempted the study from review because the subjects were not facing any harm by participating in the study.

After receiving IRB approval and laying all the proper groundwork, the team was ready to embark upon the field period of the project—the data collection via in-person and telephone interviews. The questionnaires were to be administered to a random sample of subjects from the three predetermined categories over a period of ten weeks, from June to August of 2005. The eight municipalities were divided in half, with each field researcher taking a set that varied in their distances from the research center. Robin

Liss was responsible for Lynn, Newton, Somerville, and Worcester, while Jessica Simoncelli was responsible for Arlington, Boston, Brookline, and Cambridge. Professors Berry and Portney advised on the strategies of how to gather the pool of potential interview subjects. Additionally, they trained the field researchers in the skills of in-person Elite Interviewing, in order to practice the successful techniques for professionally administering the questionnaires. These techniques—which were critical to the data collection—included how to pace the interview and set an informal tone, how to apply the follow-up probe questions, and how to take brief hand-written notes. To further the field researcher’s comfort level with the interview process, as well as to progress along the inevitable learning curve and optimize interviews in the eight selected municipalities, the field researchers conducted pretest “practice” interviews in Medford, MA and Watertown, MA. During these 10-12 interviews (collectively) the interview techniques were tested, as well as the subject questionnaires. This reduced the error from improper interview technique, poor note-taking or faulty questionnaires that emerged in the real interviews.

Before conducting any of the interviews, the field researchers collected contact information—preferably work phone numbers and emails, but often residential/personal contacts were all that was listed—from city and town government or organizational websites for as many of the elected officials and administrators as was possible. When contact information could not be found that way, the field researchers turned to other public sources, including the white pages and other available databases. Although the research net was cast across a random sample of elected officials and agency administrators, initially all City Council members, Aldermen, or Selectmen in each

municipality were targeted for interviews. These elected bodies ranged in size from five to 24 officials. Approximately 10 agency administrators in each city were also targeted, but not necessarily every single administrator.⁵³ One of the “control” elements of the project was that the interview subjects would be comparable by position across municipalities, which is why there was this difference between the two categories in the targeting strategies. All of the potential interview subjects in the Elected Official Category essentially have the same responsibilities and job descriptions, whereas with the administrators, people were pre-selected from certain agencies and departments that were most likely to provide useful information on collaboration. For those administrator interviews, subjects were pulled from a common set of agencies, including Community and Economic Development, Public Works, Environmental Protection, Parks and Recreation, and Housing Departments.⁵⁴ Additionally the field researchers attempted to contact the highest level of administrators in each department, and worked down through the ranks as roadblocks occurred.

Table 1:
Model of Contact Information Sheet, Administrators

| Name | Agency | Position | Address | Phone# | E-mail | Status | 1 st Contact | 2 nd Contact |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Doe, J. | Public Works | Director | 1 City Pl. | 617### | j.doe@ | scheduled | 06/15, 3pm | 06/17 10am |
| Smith, L. | Econ. Devel. | Dep. Dir. | 2 Main St. | 781### | smith@ | interviewed | 06/15 3:05pm | _____ |

The data was compiled into Excel spreadsheets with all the contact information (see Fig.1). The initial contact attempts were done through the phone, using all available numbers for each subject. If an email address was provided for the subject an initial email

⁵³ Robin Liss and Jessica Simoncelli, “Summer Scholars Report: Collaborative Cities Project,” October 2005, 2.

⁵⁴ Liss and Simoncelli, “Summer Scholars Report,” 3.

was also sent from the researcher's University email accounts. The research team designed a standardized phone script, with specific wording for phone messages, in person messages as well as successful contacts. Follow up scripts for second and third contact attempts were also provided to the field researchers. Follow-up calls were spaced three to five days from each other to give the targeted subject time to respond. All messages left included the field researchers' phone numbers, both at the research office in the Political Science Department at Tufts University as well as the researcher's cell phone numbers. Often, it was necessary with the administrative contacts to expand the targets to include Deputy and Assistant Director positions because of the structures of some governments and personal preferences of some government officials. In line with the rolling interview method, if other administrators or departments were mentioned in interviews in a specific study, an attempt was made to interview that individual or a member from their department.

Additionally, other contact strategies were used when no contact had been made with potential interview subjects. By the middle of the field period, there were subjects that had not responded to any phone calls and emails. Often, these were subjects whose interviews were required to maintain the integrity of the data for a particular category; that is, there were not enough subjects from a given category in a given municipality (e.g.—Boston City Councilors, or Lynn Administrators) to qualify that category for valuable use in future statistical analysis of that city/town. Those subjects were therefore sent letters via Certified Mail that explained the project, emphasized its ease and confidentiality, and implored him/her to contact the researchers.⁵⁵ This mailing effort

⁵⁵ Jeffrey M. Berry et al., Surveying Nonprofits: A Methods Handbook (Washington D.C.: The Aspen Institute), 57.

yielded about a 30% response rate, and the certified mail contacts positively increased the overall interview numbers.

As for the interviewing process, the field researchers set up appointments by establishing contacts with the interview subjects and setting meetings at their convenience. Most of the interviews were conducted during business hours; however if a subject could only meet after hours, then such an interview time was arranged. Subjects were told the interview would take approximately 30 minutes, although the actual range was from 20 to over 90 minutes long. The interviews were conducted in a location which the interview subjects selected, usually their offices, but occasionally their homes or public places like cafes. The anonymity of each subject was protected, and each interview subject was assured of that anonymity at the beginning of the interview. Careful precautions were taken during the interview process to ensure that they were comfortable with the study, such as re-explaining the general purpose of the project to the subjects before asking any questions, encouraging them to ask questions whenever they were confused or uncomfortable, and assuring them that they could refuse to answer any question they saw fit. They were told approximately how long the interview would last and that they could end it at any time if it ran too long, with the intention of then scheduling a follow-up interview to finish the interview.

The researchers took limited notes during the actual interviews to encourage narrative responses, as many interview subjects feel uncomfortable if the interviewer seems to be recording everything word for word. For this reason, audio recordings of the interviews were not conducted. It was of the utmost importance that the field researchers create an environment in which an interview subject would feel at ease and answer

questions at length. The idea behind this technique—which even encouraged informal chatting after the “formal interview” was finished—is that any little detail a subject might choose to share sheds light on topics as nebulous as professional relationships and interactions. Therefore, much of the interview would be recorded shorthand and committed to memory, and then immediately upon leaving the interview the field researchers would type up a more detailed transcript of the conversation with the aid of their notes.

This method compromised some accuracy in the interest of getting the most genuine interview. The researchers typed up interview transcripts typically within 30 minutes of the interview. However, because of logistical reasons there was sometimes a greater delay between the interview time and the writing of the transcript. This gap rarely lasted more than a half-day; the longer the delay the larger the amount of error introduced into the transcript. The senior researchers determined that this small amount of error was mitigated by the increased comfort provided to subjects by not recording them with an electronic device.

Throughout the interviews, subjects were asked about interactions and relationships they have with organizations and groups outside of government. At the conclusion of the questionnaire for both the elected officials and the administrators, a question asked for contact information from any nongovernmental groups that the subject mentioned throughout the interview. The field researchers inquired about names, preferably the person that the elected official or administrator interacted with the most in that particular group, as well as phone numbers, email addresses, and websites. The interview subject was ensured that the contact person(s) he/she listed for the named

groups would not be told who recommended them, and that those contacted in the groups would be subject to the exact same type of interview and requisite anonymity, reinforcing the confidentiality of each individual interview.

The purpose of this was to garner a completely new set of interview subjects to fill the third category of focus—Groups. This included groups of all sizes—neighborhood, citywide, statewide, chapters of national organizations—and of all missions—nonprofits from social services to advocacy, labor, and private sector. The targeting of groups was dictated by which were mentioned in the previous interviews, so as to eliminate groups that had little to no interaction with local government, and therefore to pursue interviews with those groups that were more likely to have relationships with government that would yield some data about collaboration. The contact information for these groups was compiled and formed a list (and spreadsheet similar to Fig.1) for each municipality. All of these groups were contacted through the same outreach procedures that were used for elected officials and administrators, and the interviews—while shorter and conducted over the phone instead of in person—were similar to the other categories’ interviews insofar as they were professional and had the same aims.

Ultimately, the interviews were conducted over a period of about 15 weeks, and by the close of the field period in October, there were a total of 117 interviews completed out of the 269 targeted interview subjects—with a final total of 41 administrators, 38 elected officials, and 38 group representatives. The research group then proceeded to the coding phase, during which the research team created a set of variables that could be measured by quantifying the data. After several rounds of testing and revision, a

codebook was compiled and a set of variables developed (many of which were used across different interview categories) that investigated the research questions and hypotheses provided by the four members of the research team. The variables provided a solid dataset of information about local governmental operations in Eastern Massachusetts in 2005. The variables began with the administrative interviews (e.g.—A1) and were repeated as such in the elected official and group interview coding if they were reused in the same way. New variables for the elected official and group categories were labeled C# and G# (respectively). The variables went question by question, but many of them spoke to larger, overall themes in the questionnaire. Therefore the entire conversation had to be considered while coding many of the variables. These variables were tested on many interviews before being formalized.

The interviews were divided by category, and each category was assigned to one member of the research team. This meant that one individual was coding all interviews of a specific type (Administrator, Councilor and Group). This method reduced coding error, ensuring that all the interviews in one category were examined by only one researcher, and hopefully reducing any interpretation bias by controlling each different coder's biases. Once all of the interviews were coded, the data was entered into the SPSS statistical package, and analyses yielded quantifiable results that were tested against initial hypotheses.

METHODOLOGICAL FLAWS

As with any methodology, this one contained inevitable flaws and biases that affected the outcome of the study. The first to be considered is the quality of the contact

information provided to the researchers. Many of the phone numbers that were called had no voicemail, or an “unidentifiable” voicemail message, preventing the researchers from determining whether the phone number was the proper number for the targeted subject. There is a strong possibility that many of the subjects that were eventually coded as “Refused” actually did not get any phone message requesting that they meet for an interview. This would have been a major downfall of the survey method—critically compromising the data—had the researchers not used supplemental contact methods to target subjects, including written letters and email messages. Additionally, when possible the field researchers attempted to confirm contact information for a subject with a coworker such as a fellow city councilor or administrator. This phone number error was also reduced for the Groups category in particular because that contact information was provided by an interview subject in person—one who presumably knew the individual from the group and therefore had the correct contact information.

Another pitfall of the study’s methodology is some of the common word choice in the questionnaires—particularly those for councilors and administrators. Those questionnaires referred to the outside groups as “nongovernmental groups.” Although that is a term which political scientists would literally interpret as *any* group that is not a part of the government, it may have caused confusion for some interview subjects whom mistook it for the term “nongovernmental organization” (NGO). The latter typically elicits images of exclusively social service nonprofits, but the former has a broader connotation. While the questions included a small definition of what was meant by a nongovernmental group—stating that it was to encompass business, labor, and social service interests—the term still seemed to perplex some interview subjects, as it was not

uncommon for a subject to ask for clarification of the term. Therefore, the data may be characterized by an over-representation of social service agencies because of this confusion. However, upon initial analysis, it seems as though this is not the case, most likely due to the probing cues in the interview format that allowed the field interviewers to restate and re-ask questions for precision.

In light of these methodological choices, the Collaborative Cities Project is an instrument useful for testing the hypotheses that spring from the research questions at hand. Because the questionnaires extensively cover the basics of how these municipalities function—from what issues are important in the community to how different players interact with each other—the researchers were able to gather both descriptive and explanatory data. Whether or not the data yields viable quantifiable results or suggestive qualifiable trends is the concern of the Analysis section to follow.

CHAPTER 4 EXPLORATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE COLLABORATIVE CITIES DATASET

This research posits that when municipal-level government workers—whether part of an administrative agency or an elected body—collaborate with nongovernmental groups—that is, any group that is not a government entity—this behavior affects the kind of agenda-setting that occurs in that municipality. This broad framework informs many of the hypotheses of this research, for the idea that the existence, degree, and type of collaboration are factors in determining the fate of policy issues seems well founded and logical. Breaking down the interactions between governmental and nongovernmental players into different categories—as the Collaborative Cities Project does—is a first step in thinking about how these interactions may or may not influence the policies on the agenda.

This connection between agenda building and collaboration relies on basic assumptions about what such government-group relationships imply. It assumes that demands are not turned into issues (in the words of Cobb and Elder) and in turn, issues do not become agenda items simply of their own volition, or even with the aid of administrators or elected officials, but instead that there is a fundamental involvement of groups outside of government in the political process that helps drive things along. Therefore through collaboration, this research can gauge governmental action. Collaboration can be used as a measure of agenda building in this research because if these different parties interact and have different kinds of relationships, it indicates that things are getting done, and that issues are being discussed, argued, or resolved. If this research seeks to answer questions about who is involved in forming local agendas and

how they are involved—to the end that delineating clearly these “who” and “how” inquiries will lead to an understanding of which issues are taken up onto institutional agendas—then exploring how the participants interact is critical. The differences in the types and values of relationships between government and nongovernmental entities could influence if their respective interests are attended to, and determine what kind of issues make it to the agenda.

VARIABLES

Over 200 variables were derived and coded from these interviews, dominated by the topics of collaboration and interaction between sectors, as is one of the primary interests of the Collaborative Cities senior researchers. Another large array of variables dealt with environmental issues and their existence (or lack thereof) in the different municipalities. The former grouping of variables was more useful to this research, providing general background about collaboration as a component of agenda building, as well as creating a window through which housing-specific issues could be examined. All of the pertinent variables used in later analysis of the dataset are the subject of Appendix B, but it is worth reviewing them here before launching into the hypotheses and testing of this research.

The interviews of the Collaborative Cities Project in fact were not geared to seek out housing-related information. There is an array of four housing variables, coded A88-A91, which were only added to the codebook after the interviews took place, meaning their weight is not too influential to this research. That is to say, since these variables were not in place when the actual interviews took place, there was no special attention

paid to housing issues if and when interviewees brought them up and therefore the subtleties and details of the responses might have been overlooked. Nevertheless, the housing variables array breaks down as follows: A88 asks what type of development was mentioned (residential, commercial, or other); A89 asks, if residential, then what kind (affordable, mixed-income, market-rate); A90 asks if it was affordable, then was it under Chapter 40B; and finally A91 asks if (assuming it was a nonmarket-rate development) there was NIMBYism (“Not In My Backyard” syndrome) in the host neighborhood. These variables are explored in the later part of the following analysis, while first establishing the basis of general (i.e.—not housing-specific) agenda setting and relationships between governmental and nongovernmental entities.

These conceptual underpinnings relating to local governmental processes are investigated with a core number of variables that served as the backbone of this research’s analysis. It is necessary to think about issues and participants, so this research uses some of the basic variables of the dataset to establish both who the main actors are and what kind of work they doing. Variables A15 and A16—which were directly coded from the Administrator and City Councilor questionnaires’ question 1 (see Appendix A) about what issue the interviewee has spent the most time on recently—served as a basis for determining what was important to the varying interviewees. A15 codes for the Policy Area of the issue (for example Budgetary or Environmental), while A16 is open-ended and lists all of the issues that these interviewees mentioned, and therefore the two brand the issue mentioned with a certain characteristics. As suggested by Cobb and Elder as well as Anderson, these characteristics in part determine whether an issue becomes an agenda item, and therefore these variables A15 and A16 are important to this research.

Likewise, the ideas found in the review of related literature pertaining to participants lead this research to seek out basic information about the different roles involved in these issues from the interviews. If it is possible to identify “gatekeepers” or similar participants, it brings this research closer to understanding the elements of getting an issue onto the agenda. Variables A17, A18, and A19 stand for an interesting group of participants: an issue’s Pro-side interest, Initiator, and Anti-side interest, respectively. The presence or lack of any of these three parties can affect whether an issue makes it onto an agenda but representing the strength of support or opposition that might be pushing it one way or the other. Pro- and Anti-side interests are delicate terms to use, for by virtue of being an *issue* one would assume these interests do exist. These variables A17 and A19 therefore simply stand for whether the interview subject (again in these cases administrators and elected officials only) noted the presence of these interests surrounding the particular issue. The idea is that (even if a pro- and anti-side does exist but was not mentioned) if one or the other of these two interests *is* brought up in the interview, it indicates that they were involved in the formation or fate of the issue. As for potential initiators, there is a similar stake implied in their presence (as suggested by Cobb and Elder), for if a group helps to bring an issue to the discussion table or to a governmental agenda there is a better chance it will succeed in its trajectory with that kind of support. Other variables that this research uses to measure the presence of initiation are those pertaining to the issue’s outcome: A35 (asking administrators and elected officials what the issue’s outcome is) and G42 (asking groups what the issue’s outcome is). These different categories of responses for these variables are framed in

terms of initiators, and therefore are helpful in establishing how large or minimal a role initiators play.

All of these variables are then put into the content of Collaboration—a fundamental concept for this research’s examination of legislative agendas. Collaboration between different participants—both governmental and nongovernmental—is a strong indicator of support, discussion, and general attention on an issue, which in turn indicates its promise as a potential agenda item. As this central measure of how issues are elevated to an agenda, variables A38 through A50 provide the building blocks for measuring the relationships and interactions between the administrator and elected official interviewees and the nongovernmental groups they mentioned most often in conjunction with their main policy concerns. These variables—a repeat of four variables per each of the three groups mentioned the most—cover the basic collaborative information about the group as perceived by the governmental worker. The variables are as follows (in order of first group mentioned, second, and then third): A38, A42, and A47 code the type of group—for instance a citywide environmental group or a labor union; A39, A43, and A48 code the type of relationship the interviewee has with the group—from negative to partnership—and these are the most used variables of the analysis to follow; A40, A44, and A49 code the government worker’s perceived value of their relationship with the given group, whether it be for information or just to avoid future problems with the group down the line; and lastly A41, A45, and A50 code for what the interviewee thinks gives the group their influence, from political power to a legally mandated relationship. As explained in detail in the following sections, these variables (again, particularly A39, A43, and A48) serve as the central measures of

collaboration, which in turn serve as critical to the exploration of how and why issues get onto an agenda.

HYPOTHESES

It is critical to consider both what may possibly cause different levels of collaboration to occur, and also what these different levels of interaction produce. Some broad hypotheses concerning the former are:

-Administrative agencies that work primarily with budgetary issues and economic growth are less likely to collaborate with nongovernmental organizations;

-Similarly, the main policy issues mentioned during the Collaborative Cities Project interviews that were budgetary/economic in nature likely yield less collaboration with nongovernmental agencies;

-The flip side is that, if the policy issues concerned social (or even post-material) problems like affordable housing or the environment, then those issues would be connected to closer collaboration between governmental and nongovernmental parties;

-If a nongovernmental party initiated governmental discussion of the issue mentioned, the level of collaboration as indicated by the administrator or councilor is higher, whether the relationship is positive or negative;

-If the issue mentioned had a pro- or anti-side party, the level of collaboration as indicated by the administrator or councilor is higher;

-Those municipalities with self-created affordable housing issues on the agenda are overall more likely to care about their nongovernmental collaborations;

-Specifically with housing issues, higher levels of collaboration correlate with higher levels of governmental interest in the issue or development, as opposed to just having active groups pushing and advocating for the issue on their own.

Below is an example of a two-by-two grid of hypothesis expectation, relating to the first set of hypotheses relating the Policy Area of the discussed issue with the Type of Collaboration that exists between the government and the nongovernmental entities involved with that particular issue. These visualizations are useful in simplifying expected results, so that when crosstabulations are computed, they are easily measured against each other for similarities and differences.

Table 2:
Hypothetical Relationship Between Policy Area of Issue and Type of Collaboration

| | Material Policy Area for issue | Postmaterial Policy Area for issue |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Low Collaboration level | BIG# | <i>small#</i> |
| High Collaboration level | <i>small#</i> | BIG# |

DATA ANALYSIS

The Collaborative Cities dataset, composed of 224 variables and sub-variables, yields almost exclusively nominal and ordinal data. Much of it can be initially examined as quantitative because those variables' categories are treated in interval form, however it is important to keep in mind from the outset of this analysis that—for the most part—this

data produces qualifiable trends rather than hard numerical results for this body of research. Also it is important to note that the relatively small sample size—whether looking at all 117 cases or a smaller subsample (for instance, the n number for any given A variable, which looks at administrators and elected officials)—could taint any of the resulting analyses of this dataset.

There are a number of different ways of attacking these questions about causation or influence of collaboration levels within the Collaborative Cities dataset. The hypotheses in this research suggest that collaboration is tied to the nature and subject of the policy issue, the policy initiator (if any), and whether or not a pro- or con- side existed. All of these possibilities correlate with specific variables in the dataset, and so by exploring first the simple frequency distributions of these variables (mentioned earlier), and then cross-tabulations between them and collaboration levels (e.g.—Policy Area of Issue and Collaboration Type), this research investigates its hypotheses to the end that it answers questions about agenda building and housing policy.

With regards to the more specific examination of housing issues that will be discussed later in this section, the Collaborative Cities dataset proved a less helpful resource, as expected. As mentioned before in the discussion of methodological flaws, the overall sample of 117—while adequate especially considering the depth of overall data gathered—was not large enough to encompass a substantive number of cases that were primarily concerned with housing policies, projects, or developments. The array of questions and their corresponding variables that garnered numerical values did not exceed 37 cases. It is a statistical rule of thumb that if a random sample's size is lower than 30, the significance of the resulting data is highly questionable and perhaps cannot

accurately be extrapolated to represent a population parameter. With this in mind, it is disappointing to not even have forty cases to examine from the dataset when thinking of housing-specific issues. Nevertheless, because the number of housing-related cases exceeds 30, the small sample it is not cause for throwing out these variables altogether, and it is heartening to find that at least a quarter of the total interview cases involved a housing issue in some form or another.

Collaboration—building the measures and establishing robustness

Before delving into the comparisons of collaboration with the other aforementioned variables—both for general agenda issues and later for specific housing issues—it should be noted how this research chooses to measure and indicate such collaboration. The dataset contains countless variables about collaboration, from questions asked of both the administrators and elected officials as well as the group representatives. For instance from the Administrator and City Councilor questionnaires, there are a slew of variables coded for each different group type: Neighborhood-based Citizens Group—not environmental (A20); Neighborhood-based Environmental Group (A21); Citywide Citizens Group—not environmental (A22); Citywide Environmental Group (A23); Nonprofit (A24); Ethnic Organization (A25); Citywide Civic Group (A26); Labor Union (A27); Citywide Business Association (A28); Specific Business (A29); Professional Association (A30). With three subvariables per group, these determine whether the type of group was mentioned in the interview, what type of relationship existed, and whether frustration was involved. However in the end not all of these collaboration variables are useful to testing the hypotheses of this research, as most of

them ask too broadly about collaboration. To elaborate: since most of the postulations of this research are associated with the main policy area mentioned in the interviews (variables A15 and A16), it seems that this research should find some measure of government-group collaboration specifically relating to that given policy issue. For instance, if an administrator mentioned capital projects as the issue taking most of his time, this research wants to measure the collaboration surrounding those capital projects.

This was achieved by looking at the three variables—A39, A43, and A48—that determined the *type* of collaboration (detailed later) that occurred between the government worker and the three or more groups most frequently mentioned in relation to the main policy issue. For example, if an administrator—let’s say the Commissioner of a municipality’s Public Works Department—listed sewage problems (coded as Social Services policy) as the main issue at the time of the interview, he or she would be asked about whether or not any groups from outside the government were involved with these sewage problems. Then later the response to that question about involved groups would be broken down into a battery of variables for each of the first three (or most prominently) mentioned groups. Perhaps this Commissioner talked about a neighborhood association that was directly affected by the sewage issue, and also two citywide environmental groups that were concerned. The Collaborative Cities dataset would code four variables for each of these three groups, the second of which is a variable that classifies the type of collaboration between the Commissioner/agency and each group. These are variables A39, A43, and A48. These three variables are the most direct indicators of collaboration levels related to the main policy issue mentioned, and therefore best serve this agenda-item driven research.

Upon initial crosstabulations of the data of these three variables with all the others (Policy Area, Initiators, etc.), however, the resulting distributions were not satisfactory. The data was spread too thin across the different categories with too many gaps where a category was not populated (significantly or at all), making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions. Therefore it aided this research to regroup the categories of these variables, combining them to cluster the resulting data more robustly. The original categories for these Collaboration Type variables are numbered 0 through 4, representing the following descriptions in ascending order: “Negative Relationship,” “Neutral,” “Cooperative,” “Evidence of ongoing partnership,” and “Could not be determined.” After the regrouping in SPSS, there are three new categories—the first labeled *Negative Collaboration* standing for Negative and Neutral relationships combined, the second labeled *Positive Collaboration* standing for Cooperative and Partnership relationships combined, and the third category labeled as *Collaboration Could Not Be Determined*. This regrouping seemed acceptable, as the first two original categories were expressions of non-positive relationships, and the second two of generally positive relationships.

Once this recoded variable was established for each of the three groups mentioned most in the interviews, some interesting relationships emerged between these recoded variables and other collaboration variables that strengthen their validity in this research. For instance, the recoded A39/43/48 variables revealed a logical pattern when crosstabulated with their respective “Value of Collaboration” variables. The latter group—A40, A44, and A49—are variables that correspond again to the first, second, and third groups mentioned in relation to the main issue of the interview, and are meant to represent what the administrator or elected official being interviewed perceived to be the

value of group at hand. The original range of categories for these variables preserved, as they are more nominal values and cannot be grouped as easily: from 1-7 the values are Practical, Informational, Political, Complementary, Avoidance of Future Problems, Other, and Do Not Know. When the recoded A39 is crosstabulated with A40 (dealing with the first group mentioned), there are 69 cases involved and the resulting Pearson Chi-square ratio of significance is 0.00, which implies a strong relationship between the two variables.

To summarize the distribution of this crosstabulation, the most populated cells both fell under the Positive Collaboration Type, with 21 cases listed as a Practical Relationship and 13 cases listed as a Complementary Relationship (versus 1 case under Negative Collaboration) between the government and the group. The next highest figures fell under the Negative Collaboration Type, with 8 cases apiece under the Practical Relationship (a total of 30 cases in that category, showing that almost half of the total were Practical) and the Political Relationship (versus the 4 Political cases under the Positive Collaboration Type). These figures support two overarching rational conclusions about collaboration: (1) That positive relationships correspond with those described as practical or complementary in nature; and (2) That negative relationships correspond less with pragmatic relationships and more with politically charged ones. While the Avoidance of Future Problems/Delays value category was not heavily populated—with two cases under Positive and one case under Negative Collaboration Types—it does make sense that politically charged groups might be evaluated in a more negative light in terms of their relationships to the government. Similar relationships were found between the recoded A43 and A44, as well as the recoded A48 and A49.

Both crosstabulations, with Pearson Chi-square ratios of 0.00 and 0.04 respectively, generally revealed that the Practical Relationship and/or Complementary Relationship value categories corresponded closer with the Positive Collaboration Type, and the Political Relationship and/or Avoidance of Future Problems Relationship value categories corresponded closer with the Negative Collaboration Type. For all three of these Collaboration Type and Collaboration Value crosstabulations, the Could Not Be Determined Collaboration Type was sparsely populated, simply indicating that there were not that many groups whose level of collaboration could not be determined from the interviews responses.

Besides measuring the Collaboration Type of these three groups mentioned against the perceived Value of that relationship, it is worth quickly pairing them with one other set of collaboration variables—namely, what the interviewed administrator or elected official perceived as the root of the particular group’s influence, represented by variables A41, A45, and A50. The categories for these variables (and their numeric values from the Administer and City Councilor Codebooks) are as follows: Nothing (00); Can advocate on basis of what is good for neighborhood instead of city overall (01); Only have to look out for own financial interest (02); Create confusion (03); Can influence city elections (04); Can mobilize people (05); Generally unreasonable and opposing everything (06); General lobbying (07); Use the media well (08); Legal mandate or existing relationship between group and government (09); Other (10); Could not be determined (11); Can bring jobs and business to the city (12). The most populated in the crosstabulations with recoded A39/43/48 are General Lobbying, and Legal Mandate/Existing Collaborative Relationship. These are also the most positive in nature

of the “What Gives Influence” categories. As an example, the crosstabulation between A39 and A41 (with a total of 69 cases and a Pearson Chi-square ratio of 0.059) revealed the two highest number of cases both under the Positive Collaboration Type, with 18 listed as Previously Existing relationships and 7 listed as General Lobbying (as opposed to the number of cases under Negative Collaboration Type, 1 and 4 respectively). The “What Gives Influence” categories that would be expected to correspond highly to the Negative Collaboration Type are those with more of a selfish connotation, like Can Advocate Just for Neighborhood, Only Look Out for Their Own Financial Interest, and Unreasonable. While these categories did not garner enough cases in the A39-A41 crosstabulation to definitively support the underlying theory that positively perceived influence begets positive collaboration (and vice-versa), the aforementioned findings under the Positive Collaboration Type do point to a trend. All of this further grounds the collaboration variables’ robustness within this research, making the crosstabulations with other variables that might influence collaboration all the more reliable.

Policy Area’s relationship with Collaboration:

Do an issue’s characteristics influence the type of collaboration that surrounds it?

After thoroughly exploring these collaboration variables, the recoded A39, A43, and A48 were tested against variables that represent factors that could possibly cause these varying collaboration levels. The first relationship explored is between the revised collaboration variables and the one corresponding with the Policy Area of the main issue (A16). A similar problem as the one found with A39/43/48—disparate distribution and undesirable results—occurred when examining the frequency charts of A16. Originally there were nine policy areas to code the main issue mentioned in A15: Economic

development, zoning (1); Social services—excluding public housing (2); Budget and spending (3); Contracts with city workers (4); Housing, both public and private (5); Environmental—including parks and recreation (6); Schools (7); Police, fire, and safety (8); and Other (9). When cross-tabulated with the collaboration variables, the results were spread out with many unpopulated cells, so the categories were recoded into the following three groups: 1 through 4 were collapsed and recoded as *Material Policy Area*; 5 and 6 were recoded together as *Postmaterial Policy Area*; and 7 through 9 were recoded as *Other Policy Area*.

The explanation for this rough breakdown of policy areas according to the issue's materialism assumes that governmental agenda items dealing with wealth do not require cooperation with most nongovernmental groups. Those issues based more in material or strictly monetary concerns—as opposed to those with social or postmaterial values—will be less likely to need or desire to work with groups outside the government. There are arguments for different decisions when collapsing these categories, for instance that Social Services belongs in the second category, or that the Schools policy area could be material or postmaterial depending on the particular issue. However this seemed the most straightforward way of grouping the original categories together.

Starting with the first group mentioned in each interview (variable A39), the cross-tabulations between the revised A39/43/48 variables and revised A16 (which serves as the independent variable in this test) are explored below. A summary of the results from A39 will give a telling picture of the overall results. Of the 72 cases—meaning there were 72 administrators and elected officials who mentioned at least one outside group in relation to the main issue they spoke about—28 fell in the Material Policy Area,

30 fell in the Postmaterial Policy Area, and 14 in Other Policy Area. As depicted below, it seems that the distribution of Material and Postmaterial Policy Areas across the three Collaboration categories almost mirror each other. Strikingly, they are almost identical in how the percentages of cases fall, showing consistency of governmental relationships between the groups they mention.

Table 3:
Crosstabulation of Policy Area with Collaboration Level for First Group Mentioned

| | Material Policy Area of issue | Postmaterial Policy Area | Other Policy Area of issue |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Negative Collaboration | 28.6% | 33.3% | 42.9% |
| Positive Collaboration | 60.7% | 66.7% | 42.9% |
| Don't Know Collaboration | 10.7% | 0% | 14.3% |
| Total | 100% (n=28) | 100% (n=30) | 100% (n=14) |

The results from these 71 cases evidence that the Policy Area did not matter as much to the Type of Collaboration as expected. With the Pearson Chi-Square significance ratio at 0.265, the relationship between variables is not nullified, but it is still a higher fraction than desired. Both the Material and Postmaterial Policy Areas had a nearly or exactly one third to two thirds ratio, indicating that the type of policy issue did not strongly influence the type of collaboration that occurred concerning that issue between governmental and nongovernmental entities. While the hypothesis seems logical, it is proved wrong. What is interesting to note—beyond the small number of cases that fall within the Could not be determined Collaboration and Other Policy Area categories—is that under Could Not Be Determined Collaboration there were no cases corresponding with Postmaterial Policy Area. There were only three cases where Material Policy Area

corresponded with Could not be determined Collaboration, but still it comprises over 10% of those issues, whereas for the Postmaterial issues, there were no cases recorded when the type of collaboration could not be determined. Again, there are so few cases in this category that it is hard to say what can actually be drawn from this. However these results do indicate that perhaps those administrators and elected officials whose main issue was housing- or environmental- related (i.e.—Postmaterial) were also more inclined to state with certainty in their interviews the type of collaboration they engaged in with involved interest groups. This in turn implies that there were definite relationships—whether positive or negative—with nongovernmental groups where these types of postmaterial issues were at stake, which supports the underlying theory that housing and environmental issues generate more collaboration with entities outside of city hall.

The results from the crosstabulations of the Policy Area variable with the Collaboration variables for the second and third groups mentioned—A43 and A48—follow similar patterns. For A43—which looked at 71 cases compared to the 72 in A39—the Pearson Chi-square significance ratio was 0.215, and the cell that contained the most cases (17) for this crosstabulation was the one displaying the relationship between the Postmaterial Policy Area and Positive Collaboration Type. This is to say that the highest number of cooperative or partnership relationships occurred with those issues concerning housing and the environment. It should be noted that the Negative Collaboration Type had the same number of cases in both the Material and Postmaterial Policy Area issues, detracting from the potency of the former finding. However, the way the cases distribute themselves in this crosstabulation does suggest a trend that supports

the hypothesis that postmaterial issues will spawn more positive collaboration, as long as some assumptions can be drawn from the data.

Firstly, across the Materialist Policy Area (in which there are 28 cases), the percentages for the collaboration categories 1, 2, and 3 are 39.3%, 42.9%, and 17.9% respectively. Compared to the corresponding distribution for the Postmaterialist Policy Area issues—37.9%, 58.6%, and 3.4%—the difference between Negative and Positive Collaboration Types is much smaller (a mere 3.6%), indicating that there is not a pattern of either negative *or* positive relationships with nongovernmental groups where these material issues are concerned. Secondly, this suggestive conclusion is furthered by the fact that nearly 20% of those cases fell in the Could Not Be Determined Collaboration category. Compared with 3.4% from the Postmaterial Policy Area issues, this is a sizeable percentage (even if it only represents 5 of the 28 cases), and, just like with the A39 variable from the first group mentioned, it implies that the administrators and elected officials who spoke of material issues were less likely to clearly indicate a relationship *of any sort* with nongovernmental groups. Again, it is difficult to say anything with certainty about the distributions across both the Other Policy Area and the Could not be determined Collaboration Type, as there are such a small number of cases for both. For this A43 variable, there are 14 issues that were coded Other Policy Areas, and only 6 cases that fell in the Could Not Be Determined Collaboration category. Even if the small number of cases cannot definitively indicate any patterns, the small number in itself is important to note, because it means the issues discussed and the type of collaboration are falling elsewhere.

If the administrator or elected official mentioned a third group in relation to the main issue they spoke about, it corresponded to variable A48. There were only 53 cases here, as opposed to over 70, meaning that it was less likely for a third group to be heavily involved or worth mentioning across the gamut of issues. Here, the some of the previously indicated trends are displayed in reverse, most notably the distribution of the collaboration types across the postmaterial issues. Instead of having a larger number in the Positive Collaboration Type, the percentages for the 24 cases in Positive Collaboration fell as follows: 54.2% Material Policy Area, 33.3% Postmaterial Policy Area, and 12.5% Other. This can possibly be attributed to the fact that in the questionnaire the question directly addressing negative and frustrating relationships with groups came after the other collaboration questions (therefore influencing the coding order of groups, leaving these frustrating groups to be termed Group 3), or possibly that it is human nature to express positive rather than negative relationships. But these are of course unquantifiable possibilities to explain the reversal of results for this A48 variable, and most likely it is safer to assert that the number of cases is just too small. To further discredit the significance of these results from the third groups mentioned, the Pearson Chi-square ratio is 0.774, which is much less acceptable when assuming statistical significance of data.

It seems there are certainly some differences between the results depending on whether the first, second, or third nongovernmental group mentioned is being examined. A way of testing the overall strength of the indicated trends beyond measuring the type of collaboration A39, A43, and A48 variables against each other is to compile the three into one composite variable and crosstabulate it with the Policy Area variable. These are

compiled easily as an average figure using the Compute feature in SPSS, combining A39, A43, and A48 into one Grouped Collaboration variable to see where the average values of 1 (Negative/Neutral), 2 (Cooperative/Partnership), and 3 (Could Not Be Determined) fall. The intent is that any wayward results will be neutralized by this averaging computation.

An interim step must be carried out to make this composite variable useful to this research. Since—recalling the caveat mentioned at the outset of this section—these ordinal values of Collaboration Type are treated as intervals by project’s coding scheme, the Compute function of SPSS averages the values and displays them broken down into smaller intervals than is accurate for this research’s purposes. Instead of simply showing the average at 1, 2, and 3, the range is partitioned further into the following intervals: 1, 1.33, 1.50, 1.67, 2, 2.33, 2.5, and 2.67. This spreads the 72 cases out too much, and so it is necessary to collapse these intervals into just three so as to mirror the three categories of each of the Collaboration Type variables before they were grouped together. While there is no absolutely correct way to determine this collapsing step, it seems safest to group 1, 1.33, and 1.5 under Negative; 1.67, 2, and 2.33 under Positive; and 2.5 and 2.67 under Other. Since the Could not be determined Collaboration category was the least populated for each of the variables A39, A43, and A48 when separate, it is assumed that it has less pull on the average and can therefore encompass just two instead of three intervals.

With this step complete, the composite Grouped Collaboration variable can be tested with the Policy Area variable. In keeping with previous findings, the most

populated cell here (below) is the Postmaterial Policy Area category that corresponds with positive relationships with nongovernmental groups.

Table 4:
Crosstabulation of Policy Area with Composite Variable for Collaboration Type

| | Material Policy Area of issue | Postmaterial Policy Area | Other Policy Area of issue |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Negative Collaboration | 42.9% | 40.1% | 50.0% |
| Positive Collaboration | 39.3% | 56.7% | 35.7% |
| Don't Know Collaboration | 17.8% | 3.3% | 14.2% |
| Total | 100% (n=28) | 100% (n=30) | 100% (n=14) |

Also similar to earlier patterns, the Negative Collaboration Type across the first two Policy Area categories displays figures close to each other (or here, identical with 12 cases each). This does not fit well with the original hypothesis, unlike the comparison of Material and Postmaterial Policy Area categories across the Positive Collaboration Type. The latter differs by 6 cases (11 to 17), which is a substantial number in the world of this crosstabulation, and supports the overall theory that housing and environmental issues will draw more positive collaborations with nongovernmental groups than will other types of issues.

Participant's relationship to Collaboration:

Does presence of an Initiator, Pro-, or Con-side interest influence collaboration type?

Who are the Issue Initiators?

Another hypothesis of this research—again concerning the Collaboration Type of the three specific groups mentioned in the administrators' and elected officials'

interviews—explores the influence of policy initiation upon those expressed relationships between governmental and nongovernmental entities. As a reminder, the premise of this hypothesis rests on the assumption that if a group was noted as the initiator of the main issue discussed in the interviews, then it is more likely that Collaboration Type will be positive (cooperative/partnership). Perhaps more importantly, it also assumes that the Administrator and City Councilor Questionnaires were able to glean enough information to code variable A18 (Policy Initiator) with an adequate distribution across categories.

Before analyzing any crosstabulations with A18 that correspond to this hypothesis, it serves this research to consider some of the frequency distributions of the basic variables exploring Issue Initiation. On all three of the interview questionnaire forms, interviewees were asked about whom initiated the main issue discussed (in other words, who—if anyone—brought the issue to the agenda table), although the questions have slightly different bents. Administrators' and elected officials' responses correspond with variable A18, gauging who *if anyone* (i.e.—any type of group or government entity) initiated the issue, whereas group representatives' responses—coded in variable G41—indicated whether that particular group initiated the issue discussed (from their own perspectives). The difference is subtle but worth noting when comparing the frequency distributions of these two variables. The latter, G41, looks at a total of 44 cases, with 24 of those groups saying Yes they did initiate the issue (a valid 54.5%), 9 recorded as No, and 11 as Don't Know. Compare this with the frequency distribution of A18 and the governmental interviewees' perception of issue initiation. The distribution of 71 cases boils down to: 42 with No Identifiable Initiator (according to the researchers' coding of the interviews), 13 by Groups (including all categories of nongovernmental entities, at

just over valid 18%), and 16 by the government (comprised of mayors, elected officials, and agency administrators). The disparity between those 24 cases from G41 and the 13 cases from A18 is particularly striking, for it says that over half of groups thought that they initiated the issue they were discussing, while governmental entities perceived them to initiate less than a quarter of the issues.

While this cannot be an authoritative comparison because not all of the group representatives who responded with G41 were necessarily included in the A18 responses, there is definitely a sizeable overlap because of the researchers' method for Group Selection (as described in the Methodology Section). This is to say, some groups who responded that they initiated the issue they discussed might not have been mentioned in the governmental interviews, or perhaps those issues were not the ones the administrators or elected officials chose to talk about. However, since the groups were picked for interviews based on if they were mentioned in the Administrator or City Councilor interviews—and most often in connection with the main issue discussed—it is safe to say there is a relationship between these two frequency distributions and they are valid in this research's investigation of issue initiation.

Another way to explore the topic of issue initiation is by looking at the variables regarding issue outcome. A telling pair of variables for this analysis is A35 (Outcome of Issue according to administrators and elected officials, with 71 cases) and G42 (Outcome of Issue according to group representatives, with 43 cases). Both of these variables classify the possible outcomes of the main issue in terms of the initiator, with the following range of categories: Initiator Lost; Initiator Still Working, Little Progress; Initiator Makes Progress, Issue Pending; Initiator Won; Ongoing, Outcome Not Clear;

Issue Not Outcome-driven; and Could Not Be Determined. Perhaps the most salient observation to note is that neither in A35 or in G42 did any cases fall under the first issue outcome category, meaning that there was not a single interview with an existing value for these variables that said the issue initiator lost. If taken in reverse, this strongly indicates that whoever initiates an issue succeeds to some degree with their desired outcome of the issue, which is a logical but still important cornerstone to this analysis.

By recoding the issue outcome categories to condense the resulting distributions, and then compiling the two frequencies together (again using the Compute function of SPSS), it is possible to quickly review one composite frequency distribution of issue outcome. In the recoding schema, the following original categories are grouped together: Initiator Lost with Initiator Made Little Progress, Initiator Made Progress with Initiator Won, while Issue Ongoing, Issue Not Outcome-driven, and Initiator Could Not Be Determined remain on their own. While A35 contains two categories that G42 does not (namely, that this issue is Ongoing, and the issue is Not Outcome-driven), it is still useful to look at them together with at least the overlapping categories compiled. The table below details this distribution, showing that the second group of Initiators has the greatest number of cases.

Table 5:
Frequency distribution of recoded Initiator categories (compiling Outcome Variables)

| Outcome | Frequency | Valid % |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Initiator lost/made little progress | n=4 | 3.5% |
| Initiator made progress/won | n=39 | 34.2% |
| Issue is ongoing | n=25 | 21.9% |
| Issue is not Outcome-driven | n=26 | 22.8% |
| Status could not be determined | n=20 | 17.5% |
| Total | n=114 | 100% |

This shows that—as asserted before with the total lack of Initiator Lost responses—issues discussed most commonly resulted in successful strides for the initiator. However the final three Initiator groups cannot be overlooked, for they are less expected and certainly affect this research. 17.5% of all issue outcomes were unable to be determined, meaning that nearly a fifth of the issues discussed across all three interview types could not be coded by researchers and therefore they were likely unclear in their agenda life from initiation to outcome. Also well over 40% of all issues were either ongoing at the time of the interview or (more interestingly) were issues not outcome driven and instead a part of routine work. This displays the solid presence of policy issues that are not driven to an agenda by a particular source, but that are just a standard part of the government’s daily or annual work, adding another dimension to this initiation discussion.

Initiators spawn positive collaboration?

With all this established, let us return to the hypothesis at hand between initiation and collaboration. This exploration examines all of the groups from variable A18 (the different governmental and nongovernmental groups who initiate an issue), collapsing the original fifteen categories⁵⁶ into five categories to concentrate the cases into more quantifiable results. The new categories regroup the original ones as follows: No Identifiable Group remains isolated, the two Neighborhood are grouped with the two City-wide Groups, Nonprofits remain isolated, Specific Businesses remain isolated, and

⁵⁶ Similar to the categories from Variables 20-31: No Identifiable Group (00), Neighborhood Citizens (01), Neighborhood Environmental (02), Citywide Citizens (03), Citywide Environmental (04), Nonprofit (05), Ethnic Organization (06), Citywide Civic (07), Labor Union (08), Citywide Business Association (09), Specific Business (10), Professional Association (11), City Councilor (12), Mayor (13), Agency (14), Other (15).

lastly the City Councilor, Mayor, and Agency categories are grouped together as Governmental. Not all of the categories of Issue Initiator had responses in the interviews and therefore it is just the pertinent ones above that are considered in the crosstabulations.

Table 6:
Crosstabulation of Initiator with Collaboration Type for first group mentioned

| | No Identifiable Group | Neighborhood/ Citywide | Nonprofits | Specific businesses | Government |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
| Negative Collaboration | 35.7% | 14.3% | 0% | 50% | 26.7% |
| Positive Collaboration | 59.6% | 71.4% | 100% | 50% | 60% |
| Don't Know Collaboration | 4.7% | 14.3% | 0% | 0% | 13.3% |
| Total | 100% (n=42) | 100% (n=7) | 100% (n=2) | 100% (n=4) | 100%(n=15) |

For the first group mentioned (A39), there are 70 valid cases in the crosstabulation, and the Pearson Chi-square ratio is 0.032, which points to some degree of statistical significance. However the breakdown, as shown above, is discouraging in the results it displays. Of those 70 cases, over half of them (42) fell in the first initiator group, meaning that there was no group that could be identified as initiating the main issue discussed. This leaves only 28 cases to be distributed across all of the other possible Initiator categories, which clearly lowers the significance of any patterns immediately. The second-most populated group was the Governmental category, with 15 cases, meaning that—perhaps as should be expected—a large number of the issues that get onto a municipality’s agenda are initiated by the municipality itself. Next, when looking at the distribution across the Collaboration Type categories, the trends are distinct but not robust. In each of the groups of initiators except for Specific Businesses,

there were more cases in the Positive Collaboration Type than the Negative one, but in most types not by much. This implies a loose conclusion that if an initiator of any kind was present, then there was a higher chance of a positive relationship between government and groups. However since there are so many cases with *no* initiator and there are not any other striking differences between Collaboration Type categories, this could also simply be a result of there being more Positive Collaboration Type cases overall in the project, and have very little to do with who initiated an issue. The overall faultiness of this two-variable comparison is further supported by the results of the crosstabulations for the second and third groups mentioned. The cases distribute similarly with the recoded A43 variable, with the majority of cases having no identifiable initiator, and slightly more cases in each of the initiator categories (except for Specific Business) for the Positive Collaboration Type than the Negative. Perhaps this supports a theory that those issues initiated by specific businesses beget more negative relationships between the business and the government, uncovering an interesting finding if it were more thoroughly explored. It would indicate that business relationships are generally poorer with government entities than those of public or nonprofit groups. The third group, represented by the recoded A48 variable, only had 51 cases in the crosstabulation, and therefore is less influential in its smaller sample.

Pro- and Anti-side Interests spawn respective positive and negative collaboration?

Similar to issue initiation, an examination of pro-side and anti-side groups surrounding the main issue discussed in interviews yields equally disappointing results. The reasoning that supports the relationship between pro- or anti-side presence and

government-groups collaboration mirrors that of initiation and collaboration. That is, if a particular issue garners attention (good or bad) from certain interested parties at its outset and conception on an agenda, then it will later generate a higher level of collaboration between that group and the involved government entity. A pro-side party would likely correspond to Positive Collaboration Type, while an anti-side interest would correspond with Negative Collaboration Type. But either way, there would be a direct relationship between pro- or anti-side interest and collaboration.

Such was not the case upon analyzing crosstabulations for both pro-side and con-side groups on the main issue. After looking at the relationship between pro-side groups (represented by variable A17) and the recoded A39/43/48 each separately, a composite variable was conducted as before so that the present pro-side groups were crosstabulated with an averaged Collaboration Type scheme. With a Pearson Chi-square significance ratio of 0.134, 39 of the 71 total cases fell under the category of No Identifiable Pro-side Group, leaving just 32 cases to be distributed over all the other possible relationships. The neighborhood and citywide groups represented 16 cases in which they were pro-side on an issue, however they broke down evenly across the Collaboration Types (with 7 under Negative and 8 under Positive), leaving little indication of a trend either way. There were 4 cases in which nonprofits were pro-side, all of which fell under the Positive Collaboration Type. This would be a more promising finding—in part confirming the hypothesis that pro-side groups have more positive relationships with government—if it were more than just a handful of cases. Interestingly, in the next group category, Labor, Business Associations, and Specific Businesses listed 8 groups as pro-side, 6 of which fell under Negative Collaboration Type and the other 2 under Positive Collaboration.

This would indicate that—as opposed to the previous results with nonprofits—if a business-related group was in support of an issue, that group had a more negative relationship with the involved government entity. This is less fitting with the overall hypothesis that pro-side group presence leads to positive collaboration, but it is not completely illogical, considering the common perception that business tends to butt heads with government.

The Con-side crosstabulation with the composite collaboration variable produced even less to work with as far as substantive analysis. With a Pearson Chi-square ratio of 0.181, this is largely due to the fact that of the 70 cases, a staggering majority of 57 fell under the No Identifiable Con-side Group category. Of the remaining 13 cases, 8 were found to be neighborhood or citywide groups. 6 of those were under Negative Collaboration Type, which supports the hypothesis, albeit meagerly. Otherwise, the scattering of cases across the nonprofit, business, and government categories left the Con-side crosstabulation scarcely populated outside of the No Identifiable Groups category, yielding little in the way of conclusions. These Pro-side and Con-side group considerations do not correlate as strongly with Collaboration Type as the hypothesis posited according to this dataset. However both the frequency distributions and these crosstabulations did highlight a significant finding: the dearth of identifiable affiliations surrounding the main policy issues discussed.⁵⁷ Just as with issue initiators (and even less so in the case of Con-side groups), the vast majority of administrators and elected officials interviewed did not name with certainty a party interested in the issue discussed (variable A15), whether positively or negatively. This points to less aggregate involvement (from both inside and outside of government) and concern regarding the

⁵⁷ For frequency distributions, see Appendix B.

main issues discussed. Thus the idealized image of an agenda item from its conception—warranting public and private interest, generating debate, and being pushed by these involved parties—is partially shattered by these results in this dataset.

Housing Policy's relationship to Collaboration:

Do Affordable Developments correlate with positive collaboration?

Other than the analysis with Policy Area and Collaboration Type, all these trends investigating group-government relationships and issue lifespan are framed in terms of general issues rather than specific issue types. In the context of this research, it is necessary to look at those variables specific to housing issues, and see if they yield any results that differ from the general trends. The array of housing variables, A88-A91 (refer to variables section above), was coded from interviews with administrators and elected officials, and the number of cases that included housing issues in the discussion hovered between thirty and forty for all four of these variables, setting off the warning bells of inadequate sample size. The frequency distribution for A88 codes what type of development was discussed during the interview. Of the 37 instances of housing being mentioned by either administrators or elected officials, 23 were classified as Residential, 3 as Commercial, 7 as Don't Know, and 4 as Other. Surprisingly, the frequency distributions for the last three housing variables have samples greater than 23, meaning there is some disparity between what was categorized as Residential in A88 and what is included in A89-91, which are all variables concerning residential units. Granted, the number of cases in the respective Don't Know categories is high across all three variables, indicating an overall lack of precision with these variables. For instance, in the frequency distribution for A90, which codes whether the affordable residential

development falls under the 40B state statute, the 31 total cases with existing values break down as follows: 4 Yes; 7 No; and 20 Don't Know. Next, the frequency distribution of the 32 cases in A91 (concerning the existence of NIMBYism) separate similarly: 8 Yes; 7 No; 17 Don't Know. This does not necessarily imply that the interviewees did not know about Chapter 40B or NIMBY syndrome as pertaining to their housing issues, but simply indicates that the researchers could not code anything more substantive from the interviews. This is probably due to the fact that they were added into the codebook after the interviews took place, instead of being a part of the conception of the questionnaires, which might have targeted more housing-specific questions instead of gleaning the information from the rest of the interviews afterwards.

The last variable in this housing array is A89, which looks at the different types of residential developments, the categories being Affordable, Mixed-income, Market rate, and Don't Know. Even though, once again, the distribution of the 33 total cases is not striking in the difference from category to category, this particular variable works well to represent all of the housing issue cases in an analysis with collaboration. A89 represents all of the types of residential development—ranging from affordable developments that are hypothesized to beget positive governmental relationships, to market-rate developments that would conversely relate to more negative collaboration—and therefore is interesting to crosstabulate with the composite Collaboration Type variable. When this is computed, again it averages the Collaboration Types from all three groups mentioned by administrators or elected officials, but this time only in the interviews that spoke of residential housing developments. The same problem that occurred earlier exists here, too, with the need to group together the averaged fractional values (when

SPSS breaks the range down from the original integers) into the three Collaboration Type values. In this case, the values it gives are 1, 1.33, 1.5, 1.67, 2, 2.33, and 2.67. It skips over 2.5, indicating that the data is skewed to the left with more collaboration values towards the lower end of the scale. This enables the research to group the seven values with fair confidence as follows, with more values in the first two categories: 1 and 1.33 become Negative Collaboration Type; 1.5, 1.67, and 2 become Positive Collaboration Type; and 2.33 and 2.67 become Other. This is supported by the fact that the distribution's mean is 1.36, cuing how many non-integer values to place above and below it.

Table 7:
Crosstabulation of Type of Residential Development with composite Collaboration Type

| | Affordable Development | Mixed-income Development | Market-rate Development | Could not be determined |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Negative Collaboration | 36.4% | 37.5% | 33.3% | 0% |
| Positive Collaboration | 45.4% | 50% | 66.7% | 100% |
| Don't Know Collaboration | 18.2% | 12.5% | 0% | 0% |
| Total | 100% (n=11) | 100% (n=8) | 100% (n=6) | 100% (n=8) |

The crosstabulation of these grouped collaboration values with the Residential Development Type categories is difficult to interpret. Across each of the latter categories, more cases fall under the Positive Collaboration Type than any other, indicating a loose correlation between a residential development agenda item and positive government-group relationships. When comparing the distribution in this crosstabulation *between* the Collaboration Type categories, however, the trends are less distinct. While

there are more Affordable and Mixed-income cases under Positive Collaboration, they only exceed the Negative Collaboration figure by one (5 and 4, and 4 and 3 respectively). As well, the Market-rate category breaks down with 2 cases under Negative and 4 under Positive. It would fit with the underlying hypotheses of this research for Market-rate Developments to beget negative or neutral relationships between nongovernmental entities (in this case, probably from the private sector) and the government, perhaps because of power struggles between business and government. However the results in this crosstabulation display the opposite. Therefore it seems that no clear conclusions could be drawn corresponding Residential Development Type to Collaboration Type. This does not disprove the hypothesis that where Affordable and Mixed-income Developments exist, so too do positive relationships between government and the groups they mention the most, but it does not fully support it either.

Qualitative Findings from housing interviews

Indeed the motivation to collaborate with a governmental agency or with a nongovernmental group comes in unlimited forms, not all of which can be neatly coded by any study such as the Collaborative Cities Project. One administrator from Brookline states matter-of-factly that all affordable housing projects are controversial, drawing opposition from neighbors or citizen groups in the community who do not hold the same priorities. In such cases the government often builds relationships that bring these parties into the public process of affordable development early on, so as to avoid complaints and roadblocks later. Working with private developers to ensure their market-rate projects fall within inclusionary zoning regulations, some administrators and elected officials can

maintain clear, pragmatic relationships with members of the for-profit sector, noting how they are needed in keeping economic development concerns in the balance.

One administrator of Boston expressed a complementary relationship between themselves and the groups they work with, saying the main reason for working with CDCs was because they actually do the implementation and building of the affordable project, as opposed to just funding and overseeing it as the agency does. Similarly, an administrator from Somerville states that they work with their local community corporation because it is the only way they can secure funding. This is often the case with HOME—the largest federal block grant with the sole purpose of creating and rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income households. It goes to both states and municipalities, and its application, allocation, and partnership requirements vary from place to place. Often times a city must get its share of the funding from the state’s portion of it, or must partner with nonprofits in order to qualify for the federal monies. These types of relationships are practical and complementary—which is not to say they would not work together if it was not a requirement of getting the funding—but instead highlights the paramount importance of securing financial resources in the housing arena.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

While this research should not be posing any more questions at this point, a salient query stands unanswered: what does this data from the Collaborative Cities Project have to contribute to the research fields of local governance and housing policy? There were virtually no strong findings upon analysis of the dataset—discoveries that would definitively point to one type of participant as the “be all end all” gatekeeper of local agendas, or one type of Policy Area as the only characteristic that can promote an issue to public and governmental attention. However this should not discourage scholars from seeing the value in the broader, albeit less solidly grounded conclusions drawn from the Collaborative Cities Project. Overall there were strong indications of collaboration, and more of the positive variety (i.e.—cooperative relationships or full-fledged partnerships), providing proof that the wheels were churning in these eight municipalities between the different sectors, and therefore supporting the theory that legislative action does not occur outside of these interactions. Also, despite the fact that housing issues were not the main focus of the project, there was an abundance of discussion about residential developments of all kinds. While Massachusetts has always been on the forefront of national housing programs and policy, this undeniable presence of specifically affordable housing issues is heartening in this contemporary investigation of local housing policy. Perhaps this research’s findings would have been stronger if there was no indication of governmental-group relationships and if housing issues had barely been mentioned, but instead what was revealed fits into the bounds of previous scholarship.

Review of Findings within Research Niche

An administrator in Boston who is closely tied to the city's housing issues had this to say when asked what was the biggest current issue he was working on:

Well, overall funding. The situation has gotten worse, with federal cuts by 5-10% per year, and over the years reducing the baseline. Currently Congress is trying to cut CDBGs, so I have been spending a lot of time looking for alternative and comparable grant sources... The mayor's cabinet has a strategy to develop 10,000 additional units of housing in a four-year period, but now resources are low and we now maybe can't reach that goal. Originally of those units, the plan was for 2,100 of them to be affordable, but again, that piece might suffer with the way it is now.⁵⁸

There are cases like this all over the state of Massachusetts and the country, with cities both larger and much smaller than Boston. Major cities—generally with populations more disparate in economic levels—have long-term plans that address these affordability concerns, but such programming is easier to outline than it is to fund and implement. As this particular Boston administrator comments, even with the best supported or most ambitious of plans, if the federal funding is not in place, there is not much that can be done to back or sustain large-scale and continuous affordability.

The devolution of housing responsibility from the federal to nonfederal levels is highly distinguishable over the past half century. Even from the mid 1960s, there were experiments tried and plans executed by various states and localities to address the growing dissatisfaction with the public housing system. Under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, large strides were taken to tie the stakes of housing affordability more closely to the concerns and decisions of the community. This

⁵⁸ Jessica Simoncelli, transcription of interview with anonymous subject, response to Question 1 of Administrator Questionnaire, July 2005.

served both as an impetus and a springboard for local governments to get involved with housing issues, for it forced them into considering housing in order to secure CDBGs, but also allowed them to review and oversee the housing plans for their communities with HAPs. Essentially, it has come down to HUD and the federal level providing the tools and resources, and localities deciding which to use to build programs, over what period of time and to what extent.

Indeed, today there are innovative affordable housing programs from all different types of municipalities. What distinguishes between them (and even more so among those with such programs and those without) is the stakes that a municipality has invested. How important is affordable housing to a given city or town? Important enough to necessitate a short-term plan to alleviate a pressing shortage, or to generate a wider-scale project to better the quality of life in the community overall? Housing is a curious topic for this reason, for even if it is one of a few things that everyone needs to live well, there is such a varied response from communities about what quality to maintain for what part of the population. The HUD-used definition of affordability—that is, when less than 30% of household income goes towards housing—is just a marker, for the term is inevitably subjective from community to community. If the stakes a municipality has in the affordability of its housing largely determines what kind of programs and policies it implements, then how the greatest stakeholders bring their concerns to the forefront becomes the foundational inquiry of what programs exist. In short, housing needs determine stakeholders, and these interested parties are essential to impacting housing issues' elevation to the institutional agenda.

This research looked broadly at how stakeholders *for any issue* bring their concerns to the legislative and administrative table, reviewing the salient literature from the U.S. in the past 50 years. As was uncovered in the Collaborative Cities Project, major scholarship has explored both the role of participants in agenda building and the importance of issue characteristics in determining their outcome. After exploring the differences in agendas—with the informal “systemic” and the formal “institutional” models—Cobb and Elder outline four approaches to agenda-building that get increasingly complex. The last—the groups approach—ties in the idea of collaboration toward a common legislative goal. They emphasize the concepts of initiators and gatekeepers, as the promoters and inhibitors of issues to an agenda. Kingdon furthers these strands of thought by asserting that groups outside the government and interested in a particular issue usually block issues from successfully navigating legislative waters rather than promote their passage. The thought here is reasonable, but the Collaborative Cities Project reveals that interest groups serve more than just a deterrent purpose. Beyond those that are participants in the agenda process, these scholars call attention to the issues looking for agenda status themselves, noting that their different characteristics and relevancies also play a large role in determining their outcome. From basic considerations like the public attention they receive, to more complex qualities like whether they are material or postmaterial, the characteristics of the issues themselves are critical to their shelf life.

Policy Implications

The analysis of this research that came from the Collaborative Cities Project combined the importance of the participants with that of the issue characteristics. While most of the findings were not as robust as could be hoped for, the trends that emerged are satisfactory given the magnitude of the project. With a total of 117 subjects, the subsamples were often small but still adequate to serve the analysis in at least a qualitative way. Firstly, there was an overwhelming trend within the collaboration variables toward more positive (i.e.—cooperative relationships or ongoing partnerships) than negative collaboration. Even if, when crosstabulated with other variables, these values of collaboration did not divide up evenly—for instance negative collaboration strictly with material issues and positive collaboration with postmaterial issues—the fact that more interviewees classified these relationships as cooperative indicates that the government does value its relations with nongovernmental entities. It implies that—whether nonprofits, private businesses, or citizen environmental groups—these groups have a stable place in governmental processes across issue topics. As far as initiators, pro-side, and con-side interests around the main issue discussed, the loose trends corresponding with collaboration are perhaps less interesting than the dearth of cases for each of these participant types. Typically an issue, and something worthy of elevating to an agenda, is something that contains controversy or at least strong interests one way or another (enough to have an initiator, for instance). However the Collaborative Cities Data, if it proved anything, showed how much of what happens at the local level of governments is routine work that is not spurred on by controversy but rather by sheer necessity. The implications here are twofold: first, if a group—whether governmental or

nongovernmental—has a vested interest in an issue, then it helps to show stakes and pick a side; and secondly, that it takes a lot of voices for a nonroutine issue to be paid any attention.

What does this say about housing policy specifically? The primary crosstabulation measuring collaboration with the type of residential unit built produced no clear trend, as hoped, that affordable and mixed-income projects related more closely with positive collaboration, which in turn would imply that such housing projects require strong cooperation between the government and nongovernmental entities. Even so, the trends and implications about general collaboration and participant involvement do speak to housing policy, insofar as they indicate a need for multiple interests (and perhaps with multiple viewpoints) to get an issue on the agenda and have an administrator or elected official prioritize it. The Collaborative Cities Project was not exclusively concentrated upon ideas of agenda building or of affordable housing, but it ended up speaking volumes about both.

APPENDIX A

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW FORM/QUESTIONNAIRE

[Staple business card here]

**Bay State Cities Project
Department of Political Science
Tufts University**

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW FORM

Date:

Interview Subject:

Title, Office

Phone #:

Email address from business card:

Interviewer

Comments on quality of interview. (If typical, you need not put anything here. But if subject is uncooperative, evasive, especially helpful, note here *briefly*.)

Names of organizations/individuals he mentioned (or suggested) that we might want to talk to. When he/she mentions the name of an organization, make sure you get the name of an individual to talk with. If a phone number is offered, include it here. If your write-up does not indicate what kind of organization each is, note that here:

[Hand business card at opening; take offered card in return]

Thank you so much for taking time from your busy day to speak with me. As I think I said to you on the phone, our research team at Tufts is conducting a project on city government. We're interviewing officials from eight different cities from eastern Massachusetts in the hopes of better understanding policymaking and urban government.

[NOTE: If respondent asks you, which are the cities, it's ok to list them: Boston, Worcester, Lynn, Somerville, Cambridge, Arlington, Brookline, and Newton]

[NOTE: If respondent asks why we picked his/her city, your response should be something like: "There were a number of factors, but the principal that guided us was to choose a set of cities that were diverse from each other in terms of the socioeconomic status of the residents]

By way of introduction let me also emphasize that this conversation is only for research purposes. In our papers and articles we'll never quote you by name or identify you in any way. Everything is confidential.

Q Intro Before we start, I just want to make sure I have you properly identified. On your card it says you're the [title]. <Or, if no card: I understand you're the [title]> Title aside, what is your job here? What are you responsible for?

Q1 To get a better idea of what goes on here I wonder if you could tell me a little about the issue you've been spending most of your time on. Over the past month or so, what have you been working on the most?

PROBE [We want to get the story here, with at least some detail, so that we can determine if there were any interest groups involved, so if their description is very brief, probe for more by picking out something in what they did say and encourage them to talk more. As with, "Interesting. I was curious, for example, that you mentioned that Jones got involved by accident, but Smith had been working all along on it. Could you elaborate?" Or some such.]

PROBE[If they don't include this information, follow-up with:] And how did that issue come on to your agenda? Where did it come from?

Q2 Thanks, that was really helpful. Looking back in time, how has the work in this office changed? Are there new procedures you use, new different kinds of demands that are placed upon you?

Q3 To round off this background, how does the size of your office today compare with its size, say, 10 years ago? In terms of FTE's, what would the comparison be?

You're going to ask either 4a or 4b.

Q4 I want to return if I could to the story you told me at the outset about the [issue they just described].

EITHER:

4a-1 As you told the story, you mentioned [name of organization(s)], which is/are involved on this issue. Could you tell me a little bit more about their role?

4a-2 What other nongovernmental organizations were involved in this issue?

OR, IF NO GROUPS WERE MENTIONED

4b-1 Were there any organizations from outside of government, from the nonprofit, for-profit, or labor sectors were involved in this issue?

4b-2 [If not clear from above] And could you tell me a little about how they were involved?

Q5 When an administrator like yourself is dealing with outside organizations, he/she is sometimes just trying to be responsive to requests, making sure government is open to its constituents. Other times, administrators work with outside organizations in an attempt to collaborate with them, or try to build a coalition with them. For the organizations you just mentioned, which fall into the collaborative/partner category and which are organizations that you respond to but don't try to partner with?

PROBE: [If not clear from their answers, for those groups that fall into the collaborative category] And what makes these groups valuable to you? What is that they have to offer?

Q6 Are there any organizations that you've found frustrating to work with? Organizations that try to block what you want, or they somehow work at cross-purposes to your efforts?

PROBE [If not clear from their answers] what is it that gives these groups what influence they have?

Q7 Does your agency have any advisory committees made up of people from the community, or representatives of local organizations?

If yes, ask, "Would it possible to get a membership list, or is it on the city's web site?"

Q8 Let me ask a different sort of question, but again about outside organizations. One thing that's not well understood by political scientists is the role of nongovernmental organizations in local elections. Most political science research is on state or national elections. Since you're an administrator and don't have to stand for election, you might be a good observer, or at least a neutral one, in discussing this. Do any of these outside organizations provide any kind of assistance, directly or indirectly, to city council [selectman, alderman] candidates or candidates for mayor?

PROBE [For the organization listed as most important, or listed first if they're treated equally, probe for what, specifically, did they do in the last election]

Q-LAST We've covered a lot of ground. Is there something I should be asking. If you were sitting in my seat, what would you be asking?

Q-Help That just about wraps things up. If I could ask for your help on one thing, though. As we spoke you mentioned some organizations that you interacted with. We're going to follow up and try to do brief phone interviews with one representative of each group we hear about. [**Here distinguish between organizations where he/she mentioned a person, and those that he/she didn't.**] Could you give me the name of someone at the [**organizations where he/she didn't give you a name**].

Let me make sure I have the names right for [**list names mentioned earlier; probe if its not clear how you get a hold of them; nonprofits might be run out of someone's home. Businesses, business associations, and unions should be easy to find.**]

That's it. Thanks so much. [**Close your folder and put away your pen in a very obvious fashion, indicating that you really are done. Then:**] Maybe I should ask if there's something I should have been asking you?

CITY COUNCILOR INTERVIEW FORM/QUESTIONNAIRE

[Staple business card here]

**Bay State Cities Project
Department of Political Science
Tufts University**

CITY COUNCILLOR INTERVIEW FORM

Date:

Interview Subject:

City's Election Cycle [year of next or last city council election]:

Phone #:

Email address from business card:

Interviewer: Robin__ Jessie__

Comments on quality of interview. (If typical, you need not put anything here. But if subject is uncooperative, evasive, especially helpful, note here *briefly*.)

Names of organizations/individuals he mentioned (or suggested) that we might want to talk to. When he/she mentions the name of an organization, make sure you get the name of an individual to talk with. If a phone number is offered, include it here. If your write-up does not indicate what kind of organization each is, note that here:

[Hand business card at opening; take offered card in return]

Thank you so much for taking time from your busy day to speak with me. As I think I said to you on the phone, our research team at Tufts is conducting a project on city government. We're interviewing officials from eight different cities from eastern Massachusetts in the hopes of better understanding policymaking and urban government.

[NOTE: If respondent asks you, which are the cities, it's ok to list them: Boston, Worcester, Lynn, Somerville, Cambridge, Arlington, Brookline, and Newton]

[NOTE: If respondent asks why we picked his/her city, your response should be something like: "There were a number of factors, but the principal that guided us was to choose a set of cities that were diverse from each other in terms of the socioeconomic status of the residents]

By way of introduction let me also emphasize that this conversation is only for research purposes. In our papers and articles we'll never quote you by name or identify you in any way. Everything is confidential.

Q1 Let me begin by asking you a little bit about yourself. Tell me about your background and how you eventually ended up on the city council?

IF THE SUBJECT DOESN'T MENTION THE DATE: I'm not sure I got down the date of your first election to the city council?

Q2 I want to jump forward from your first election to the present. Tell me about the issue you've been spending the most time this past month. If you could, tell me the story of that issue.

PROBE [We want to get the story here, with at least some detail, so that we can determine if there were any interest groups involved, so if their description is very brief, probe for more by picking out something in what they did say and encourage them to talk more. As with, "Interesting. I was curious, for example, that you mentioned that Jones got involved by accident, but Smith had been working all along on it. Could you elaborate?" Or some such.]

PROBE[If they don't include this information, follow-up with:] And how did that issue come on to the to attention of the city council? Where did it come from?

You're going to ask either 3a or 3b.

EITHER:

3a-1 As you told the story, you mentioned [name of organization(s)], which is/are involved on this issue. Could you tell me a little bit more about their role in all of this?

3a-2 What other nongovernmental organizations were involved in this issue?

IF NECESSARY, PROBE FOR THEIR ROLE.

OR, IF NO GROUPS WERE MENTIONED

3b-1 Were there any organizations from outside of government, from the nonprofit, business, or labor, sectors were involved in this issue?

3b-2 **[If not clear from above]** And could you tell me a little about their role in all of this?

You'll ask either 4a or 4b:

Q4a-1 IF THE RESPONDENT'S ACCOUNT OF HIS/HER ELECTION IN #1 WAS THEIR FIRST AND MOST RECENT ELECTION: If I could I'd like to return to that first election you spoke of just a few minutes ago. You mentioned some organizations/an organization that helped in your race for the city council. I wonder if you could expand on what you said and describe the kinds of assistance they provided to you: campaign workers, phone calls—what did they do to help?

PROBE IF THEY MENTIONED ONLY ONE OR TWO

ORGANIZATIONS: Were there other organizations that helped or was that pretty much it?

Q4a-2 ALTERNATIVE: IF THEY DIDN'T MENTION ANY ORGANIZATIONS: If I could I'd like to return to that first election you spoke of just a few minutes ago. Were there any nongovernmental organizations—civic groups, business, nonprofits, labor, political organizations—that provided assistance to you in that election?

PROBE IF NECESSARY: I wonder if you could expand on what you said and describe the kinds of assistance they provided to you: campaign workers, phone calls—what did they do to help?

OR IF THERE WAS A MORE RECENT ELECTION THAN THEIR FIRST:

4b Earlier you talked about your first election. I'd like to move forward in time to your most recent election. Could you describe that campaign and describe your coalition of supporters?

PROBE IF NECESSARY: You mentioned some organizations, like the [name of organization(s)]. Could I get you to expand on how they helped you? What kind of assistance did they provide to you in the last election?

PROBE IF THEY DIDN'T MENTION ANY SPECIFIC

ORGANIZATIONS: You mentioned your coalition but I'm not clear as to whether there were any organizations that were actively working on your behalf, or was it just people like [name a constituency that he/she identified] that came to work on your behalf?

Q5 Whether they supported you or not, what are the organizations that you hear from most in your work here on the council—the organizations that most frequently come to you to ask for help, to lobby you, give you studies or memos, or just to keep in touch?

Q6 Thinking about the whole rest of the council rather than yourself, who would you think are the nongovernmental organizations that most frequently meet with your colleagues?

Q7 Are there any organizations that you've found frustrating to work with? Organizations that try to block what you want, or they somehow work at cross-purposes to your efforts?

PROBE [If not clear from their answers] what is it that gives these groups what influence they have?

Q-LAST We've covered a lot of ground. Is there something I should be asking. If you were sitting in my seat, what would you be asking?

Q-Help

That just about wraps things up. If I could ask for your help on one thing, though. As we spoke you mentioned some organizations that you interacted with. We're going to follow up and try to do brief phone interviews with one representative of each group we hear about. **[Here distinguish between organizations where he/she mentioned a person, and those that he/she didn't.]** Could you give me the name of someone at the **[organizations where he/she didn't give you a name].**

Let me make sure I have the names right for **[list names mentioned earlier; probe if its not clear how you get a hold of them; nonprofits might be run out of someone's home. Businesses, business associations, and unions should be easy to find.]**

That's it. Thanks so much. **[Close your folder and put away your pen in a very obvious fashion, indicating that you really are done. Then:]** Maybe I should ask if there's something I should have been asking you?

LOCAL GROUPS INTERVIEW FORM/QUESTIONNAIRE

[Staple business card here]

**Bay State Cities Project
Department of Political Science
Tufts University**

LOCAL ACTIVIST INTERVIEW FORM

Date:

Interview Subject:

Name of Organization

Phone #:

Email address from business card:

Interviewer: Robin__ Jessie__

Comments on quality of interview. (If typical, you need not put anything here. But if subject is uncooperative, evasive, especially helpful, note here *briefly*.)

Names of organizations/individuals he mentioned (or suggested) that we might want to talk to. When he/she mentions the name of an organization, make sure you get the name of an individual to talk with. If a phone number is offered, include it here. If your write-up does not indicate what kind of organization each is, note that here:

INITIAL PHONE CALL SCRIPT:

My name is [Robin Liss/Jessie Simoncelli] and I'm calling you from the Tufts University Department of Political Science. I'm part of a research team that is currently in the field doing a project on urban government in eight Massachusetts cities. One of those cities is [name of city]. I've been doing some interviews with people in government and your name came up as someone it would be useful for me to talk to.

So what I'd like to do is to set up a time to talk. I'm very flexible in my schedule and I'll do this whenever it's convenient. I can either do it over the phone or I could come out to [city] and we could have coffee at a Starbucks or some such near your home or office. We could even do it now if you have a half hour. So what would be best for you?

NOTE: You need to be pleasant but insistent at this point. If they try to put you off, “I’m busy now but maybe next month,” you respond. “Fine, what would be a good day next month. Why don’t we pencil something in and I’ll leave you my phone number if you have to reschedule.”

NOTE: If they say either a phone interview or in-person, your response will depend on where you are in your interviewing. If time seems abundant, or if the interviewee is close by (Arlington, Somerville), then opt for in-person. If you have reason to believe that the subject may be someone marginal in that city’s politics, if it’s far away (Worcester), or if you have more interviews than you can handle, then opt for a phone interview. You may want to wait on these interviews until you have a number of city councilors or city administrators under your belt and opt for an in-person interview for those interest group activists whose name has come up more than once.

NOTE: If the respondent asks you, “who mentioned my name?” or “who recommended me?”, say something like, “I’m a little constrained here. When we interview someone, we promise them that the interviews are confidential. But that would go for any interview I conduct with as well: everything is confidential and you’ll never be mentioned by name.

If not clear from conversation already, confirm group’s existence here: Before I get off, let me just make sure I have you properly identified. You were mentioned as being active in [name of group]. That is correct?

If they say something like, “well, it’s not much of a group” or “we’re not really active now” you should respond, That’s ok. As long as you were active at one time and you were working on behalf a group, no matter how informal, that’s fine. **If it becomes clear that the person really is a sole activist, acting only on his/her own behalf, then say something like,** “I guess we were misinformed. We’re restricted in our interviewing to organizational representatives. So we won’t need to talk to you after all. I apologize for taking up your time. But thanks! **If not clear even after some probing, err on the side of scheduling the interview.**

Interview scheduled for DATE:
LOCATION
TIME
NOTES:

OR Proceed directly to interview over phone

FOR SUBSEQUENT INTERVIEW RATHER THAN THOSE DONE IMMEDIATELY OVER THE PHONE

Subsequent Phone Interview:

NOTE: When you reconnect with the respondent over the phone, your opening spiel should be relatively short. Don't ask if this is still a good time to talk; assume it is. You don't want to give them an opportunity to postpone. They'll voluntarily tell you if they can't do it right then. Your over the phone reconnection should go something like this: "Hi, this is Robin Liss/Jessie Simoncelli, calling for our appointment to talk about city government in [city]. I just want to remind you that this is a scholarly study conducted by a team of political scientists at Tufts University. The interview is strictly confidential; nothing we write will contain your name or the name of any organization you're affiliated with. So let me get started [proceed to Q1].

Subsequent In-Person Interview

NOTE: If your reconnection is for an in-person interview, you can proceed more casually and don't need to worry about "phone fatigue". You can use the above patten and add to it as you see fit. Remember to hand out your business card at the beginning. Also remember to say, "I just want to remind you that this is a scholarly study conducted by a team of political scientists at Tufts University. The interview is strictly confidential; nothing we write will contain your name or the name of any organization you're affiliated with.

Q1 I wonder if I could ask you a little about yourself. Tell me how you got involved in the community and how you came to be active in [name of organization].

Q2 In this context I'd like to get you to talk about some recent work of the [organization]. Could you tell me about the issue you've been spending the most time on of late? Tell me the story.

You'll ask either 3a or 3b

Q3a [IF THEY TOLD A STORY THAT INVOLVED AN ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY, SEGUE INTO Q3 WITH SOME TIE, LIKE:] Your story leads to the next area I wanted to explore. We're interested in your interaction with local agencies of government. Is the [name of agency from story] the agency you interact with most frequently? **[THEN]:** Tell me what your relationship is like with that agency **[the agency he/she said they spent the most time with, even if it is not the one initially mentioned in the story]**. What kinds of interactions do you have with it?

OR

3b [THIS VERSION OF #3 IS FOR RESPONDENT'S WHOSE STORY DIDN'T DEAL DIRECTLY WITH AN ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY] I want to turn more directly to a discussion of the government here in [city]. First, the

administrative side of government and then later the city council. What is the agency of the local government that you interact with most frequently? **[THEN]:** Tell me what your relationship is like with that agency. What kinds of interactions do you have with it?

Q4 Let me continue you in this vein. Thinking about your relationship with this agency, I want to give you a choice of how to describe that relationship. And let me be a bit academic and ask you to think of a continuum with three points on it. At one end we would place relationships between local community groups and administrators as collaborative: partners who work cooperatively together. At the other end of the continuum we would place relationships that are conflictual. And in the middle of the continuum, are relationships where the agency is friendly and open to talking with outside groups, but remains independent and doesn't work in a collaborative or partner-like manner with groups like yours. I know that was a long question! But where would you place your organization's relationship on that continuum?

PROBE IF THEIR ANSWER WAS BRIEF: Was the relationship always this way, or has evolved one way or the other over the years.

Q5 Do you sit or another member of your organization sit on any advisory committees for the city?

Q6 Let's move on to the city council. Who are the city councilors you work the most closely with? Tell me what kind of relationship and interactions you have with them?

Q7 Again, by way of summary, I'd like you to think of the same continuum I detailed just a little while ago: at one end is a collaborative relationship, at the other is a conflictual one. In the middle is an openness to talk with you but not a collaborative or partner-like relationship. Thinking of your relationship to the city councilors that you interact with most frequently, where would you locate yourself on this continuum.

Q8 In the last election were you or your organization active on behalf of a candidate or candidates for city council or for mayor?

PROBE TO MAKE SURE YOU GET A CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT THE ORGANIZATION GAVE TO THE CAMPAIGN(S). How would you evaluate the assistance you gave to this/these campaigns? Do you think what you/your organization did made a significant difference?

Q-Help NOTE: If there are other organizations the individual mentions that appear to be active in the policymaking process in the city, ask: That just about wraps things up. If I could ask for your help on one thing, though. As we spoke you mentioned some

organizations that you interacted with. We're going to follow up and try to do brief phone interviews with one representative of each group we hear about. [**Here distinguish between organizations where he/she mentioned a person, and those that he/she didn't.**] Could you give me the name of someone at the [**organizations where he/she didn't give you a name**].

Let me make sure I have the names right for [**list names mentioned earlier; probe if its not clear how you get a hold of them; nonprofits might be run out of someone's home. Businesses, business associations, and unions should be easy to find.**]

FOR IN-PERSON: That's it. Thanks so much. [**Close your folder and put away your pen in a very obvious fashion, indicating that you really are done. Then:**] Maybe I should ask if there's something I should have been asking you? [**Do not take notes, leave notebook closed even if they talk about something directly relevant**]

FOR PHONE: That's it. Thanks so much. Maybe I should ask if there's something I should have been asking you?

FOR IN-PERSON:
[**Linger at door if comfortable; small talk might be revealing at this point**]

APPENDIX B

COLLABORATION

Frequency of A39 when regrouped into three categories instead of the original five

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1.00 | 24 | 20.5 | 33.3 | 33.3 |
| | 2.00 | 43 | 36.8 | 59.7 | 93.1 |
| | 3.00 | 5 | 4.3 | 6.9 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 72 | 61.5 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 45 | 38.5 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of A43 when regrouped into three categories instead of the original five

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1.00 | 28 | 23.9 | 39.4 | 39.4 |
| | 2.00 | 37 | 31.6 | 52.1 | 91.5 |
| | 3.00 | 6 | 5.1 | 8.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 71 | 60.7 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 46 | 39.3 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of A48 when regrouped into three categories instead of the original five

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1.00 | 24 | 20.5 | 45.3 | 45.3 |
| | 2.00 | 22 | 18.8 | 41.5 | 86.8 |
| | 3.00 | 7 | 6.0 | 13.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 53 | 45.3 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 64 | 54.7 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of Composite collaboration variable, averaging the above three tables

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1.00 | 10 | 8.5 | 13.9 | 13.9 |
| | 1.33 | 14 | 12.0 | 19.4 | 33.3 |
| | 1.50 | 7 | 6.0 | 9.7 | 43.1 |
| | 1.67 | 9 | 7.7 | 12.5 | 55.6 |
| | 2.00 | 21 | 17.9 | 29.2 | 84.7 |
| | 2.33 | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 88.9 |
| | 2.50 | 4 | 3.4 | 5.6 | 94.4 |
| | 2.67 | 4 | 3.4 | 5.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 72 | 61.5 | 100.0 | |
| | Missing | System | 45 | 38.5 | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

POLICY AREA

recomb policy area for issue, from nine agency categories to three

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1.00 (MAT) | 29 | 24.8 | 39.7 | 39.7 |
| | 2.00 (P.MAT) | 30 | 25.6 | 41.1 | 80.8 |
| | 3.00 (OTHER) | 14 | 12.0 | 19.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 73 | 62.4 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

INITIATORS

Frequency for A18: Initiating organization (NB: several categories of groups were not mentioned)

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | No identifiable group | 42 | 35.9 | 59.2 | 59.2 |
| | Neighborhood based citizens group | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 63.4 |
| | Neighborhood based environmental group | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 64.8 |
| | Citywide citizens group | 2 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 67.6 |
| | Citywide environmental group | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 69.0 |
| | Nonprofit group | 2 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 71.8 |
| | Specific business | 4 | 3.4 | 5.6 | 77.5 |
| | City councilor | 4 | 3.4 | 5.6 | 83.1 |
| | Mayor | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 87.3 |
| | Dept or agency official | 9 | 7.7 | 12.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 71 | 60.7 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | 99 | 2 | 1.7 | | |
| | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| | Total | 46 | 39.3 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of G41: Did group initiate issue (in the group's opinion)?

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Yes | 24 | 20.5 | 54.5 | 54.5 |
| | No | 9 | 7.7 | 20.5 | 75.0 |
| | DK | 11 | 9.4 | 25.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 44 | 37.6 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 73 | 62.4 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency for G42: Outcome of issue (in terms of initiation, groups perspective)?

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Initiating side still working, little progress | 3 | 2.6 | 7.0 | 7.0 |
| | Initiating side made progress | 14 | 12.0 | 32.6 | 39.5 |
| | Initiating side won | 12 | 10.3 | 27.9 | 67.4 |
| | DK, unclear | 14 | 12.0 | 32.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 43 | 36.8 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | 9 | 1 | .9 | | |
| | System | 73 | 62.4 | | |
| Total | | 74 | 63.2 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of A35: Outcome of issue (from administrator/elected official perspective)?

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Initiating side still working, little progress | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| | Initiating side made progress | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 5.6 |
| | Initiating side won | 10 | 8.5 | 14.1 | 19.7 |
| | Ongoing, resolution unclear | 25 | 21.4 | 35.2 | 54.9 |
| | Issue not outcome driven | 26 | 22.2 | 36.6 | 91.5 |
| | Could not determine | 6 | 5.1 | 8.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 71 | 60.7 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | 9 | 2 | 1.7 | | |
| | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| Total | | 46 | 39.3 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of Composite of recoded G42 and A35: Outcomes in terms of initiators

| OUTCOME | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 1.00—init. lost/ little progress | 4 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| | 2.00—init. won/ large progress | 39 | 33.3 | 34.2 | 37.7 |
| | 3.00—issue ongoing | 25 | 21.4 | 21.9 | 59.6 |
| | 4.00—issue not outcome driven | 26 | 22.2 | 22.8 | 82.5 |
| | 5.00—could not determine | 20 | 17.1 | 17.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 114 | 97.4 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | System | 3 | 2.6 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

PRO- AND ANTI-SIDE INTEREST

Frequency of A17: Pro-side interest group

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|--|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | No identifiable group | 40 | 34.2 | 55.6 | 55.6 |
| | Neighborhood based citizens group | 7 | 6.0 | 9.7 | 65.3 |
| | Neighborhood based environmental group | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 66.7 |
| | Citywide citizens group | 5 | 4.3 | 6.9 | 73.6 |
| | Citywide environmental group | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 77.8 |
| | Nonprofit group | 4 | 3.4 | 5.6 | 83.3 |
| | Labor union | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 84.7 |
| | Citywide business association | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 86.1 |
| | Specific business | 6 | 5.1 | 8.3 | 94.4 |
| | Mayor | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 95.8 |
| | Dept or agency official | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 72 | 61.5 | 100.0 | |
| | Missing | 99 | 1 | .9 | |
| System | | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| Total | | 45 | 38.5 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of A19: Anti-side interest group

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|--|
| Valid | No identifiable group | 58 | 49.6 | 81.7 | 81.7 | |
| | Neighborhood based citizens group | 4 | 3.4 | 5.6 | 87.3 | |
| | Citywide citizens group | 3 | 2.6 | 4.2 | 91.5 | |
| | Citywide environmental group | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 93.0 | |
| | Nonprofit group | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 94.4 | |
| | Specific business | 2 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 97.2 | |
| | Mayor | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 98.6 | |
| | Dept or agency official | 1 | .9 | 1.4 | 100.0 | |
| | Total | 71 | 60.7 | 100.0 | | |
| | Missing | 99 | 2 | 1.7 | | |
| | | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| Total | | 46 | 39.3 | | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | | |

HOUSING POLICY

A88: Type of housing development mentioned

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|-------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 0 | 7 | 6.0 | 18.9 | 18.9 |
| | Residential | 23 | 19.7 | 62.2 | 81.1 |
| | Commercial | 3 | 2.6 | 8.1 | 89.2 |
| | Other | 4 | 3.4 | 10.8 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 37 | 31.6 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | 9 | 36 | 30.8 | | |
| | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| | Total | 80 | 68.4 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

Frequency of A89: Type of residential development mentioned

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | 0 | 8 | 6.8 | 24.2 | 24.2 |
| | Affordable housing | 11 | 9.4 | 33.3 | 57.6 |
| | Mixed housing | 8 | 6.8 | 24.2 | 81.8 |
| | Market rate housing | 6 | 5.1 | 18.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 33 | 28.2 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | 9 | 40 | 34.2 | | |
| | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| | Total | 84 | 71.8 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

A90: Is affordable housing 40B?

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Missing | 8 | 6.8 | 25.8 | 25.8 |
| | Yes | 4 | 3.4 | 12.9 | 38.7 |
| | No | 7 | 6.0 | 22.6 | 61.3 |
| | DK | 12 | 10.3 | 38.7 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 31 | 26.5 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | Missing | 42 | 35.9 | | |
| | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| | Total | 86 | 73.5 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

A91: Is NIMBY involved in host community?

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Missing | 8 | 6.8 | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| | Yes | 8 | 6.8 | 25.0 | 50.0 |
| | No | 7 | 6.0 | 21.9 | 71.9 |
| | DK | 9 | 7.7 | 28.1 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 32 | 27.4 | 100.0 | |
| Missing | Missing | 41 | 35.0 | | |
| | System | 44 | 37.6 | | |
| | Total | 85 | 72.6 | | |
| Total | | 117 | 100.0 | | |

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