Chapter 5

Do Interest Groups Influence Local Elections?

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If before there was some question about whether organized groups are active in local politics, the preceding chapters answered it. In chapter 2, after pointing out how existing theories of interest groups are not helpful for explaining interest group activity in local government, I developed a theoretical framework that can be used to generate predictions about how active interest groups will be in a government and what kinds of interest groups we can expect to be active. Using data from a survey of local elected officials, I demonstrated that the overall amount of interest group activity increases with the size, scope, and degree of conflict in a particular local government, and I showed that the types of interest groups that are most active in local politics are those with a large, direct stake in the policies the local governments make. And because the kinds of local policies that most municipal governments make are largely distinct from those salient in national politics, the contours of local interest group systems are distinct as well. While the particulars vary across states and localities depending on the policy stakes, I showed that the most consistently active groups in U.S. city politics are local chambers of commerce, developers and other growth-oriented businesses and associations, neighborhood associations, police unions, and firefighter unions—all groups that have a large, direct, and material stake in the policies municipal governments make.

Chapter 3 then put the focus on interest group activity in municipal elections: what issues are in play in local elections, which interest groups tend to be most active and where, what kinds of electoral activities they engage in, which of those activities are most important for influencing election outcomes, and whether there are clear coalitions of interest groups in local elections that mirror interest group coalitions in national politics. The findings again underscored the importance of interest groups as actors in local elections and the distinctiveness of local elections. Interest groups are indeed active in elections in all but the smallest municipalities. Aside from neighborhood associations—which are active in local politics but *not* especially active in elections specifically—it is the same set of groups mentioned above that are most consistently active in municipal elections: chambers of commerce, developers and other businesses related to land use, and public safety unions. The issues at stake in local elections suggest that they are not miniature versions of national elections, and there is little sign that the most active interest groups are operating in coalitions that resemble national interest group coalitions: for example, it is very common for government employee unions to back the same candidates as local businesses and construction companies. Moreover, local candidates report that the most important things interest groups can do in local elections are endorsing candidates and mobilizing voters; only in the largest cities do candidates report that giving money is an important way for interest groups to have an impact.

Chapter 4 turned to questions about political party activity in local elections—a topic that is almost entirely unstudied in the modern American politics literature. Most municipal elections in the U.S. are formally nonpartisan, and municipal reformers of the early 20th century tried to reduce the influence of parties in local elections, and so some might suspect that parties are

relatively inactive in local politics today. But if interest groups must form party coalitions to have influence, as the UCLA school of parties suggests (Bawn et al. 2012), then perhaps we *should* expect to find political parties active in local politics. The empirical evidence I showed in chapter 4 told a more nuanced story. I found that the two major political parties are actually quite active in municipal elections—more so in cities with partisan elections, but even in cities with nonpartisan elections. However, there is little indication that parties in local elections are acting as coalitions of local policy demanders in the way that the UCLA school of parties theorizes for the national context. Instead, the evidence suggests that parties are just another group in local elections, working alongside but not necessarily in coordination with local interest groups. While it seems reasonably clear that interest groups like local chambers of commerce and firefighter unions are pursuing favorable local policies, political parties might be active in municipal elections for other reasons, such as to groom candidates for higher office or to build the party network.

Beginning with this chapter, I shift my focus from describing local organized group activity to evaluating whether local organized groups exercise influence. I start here with a question about group influence in local elections: when a group is more active in local elections, are the winning candidates more favorable toward the group's policy goals? My decision to focus on elections is not meant to suggest that all or even most group influence occurs through the electoral process, because of course groups can also lobby, testify at hearings and public meetings, participate on commissions and boards, and—for public-sector unions—engage in collective bargaining. But there is good reason to think that a group's influence at those later stages *depends* on its activity in elections. One of the main reasons elected officials might feel compelled to listen and respond to the group when it lobbies or testifies is that the group has some clout in elections: perhaps the official was recruited by the group, received electoral support from the group, or is concerned that the group will campaign against her in the next election. As a first step toward an understanding of whether groups have influence, then, it makes sense to start with their role in local elections.

The Local Politics Literature and its Treatment of Elections and Groups

The existing local politics literature is strangely bifurcated in its treatment of local elections and interest groups. In one branch of the literature, elections are the main focus, but the research emphasizes the role of voters and elected officials—and almost entirely ignores organized groups and public policy. In another branch of the literature, scholars are somewhat more focused on policy and sometimes discuss certain types of organized groups, but they downplay or ignore the role of local elections. I summarize each branch of the literature in turn.

Thanks to the growing body of quantitative research on U.S. local elections, we now know a fair bit about what kinds of people run for office and how voters make choices in local elections (Oliver and Ha 2007; Oliver 2012). Scholars have also made progress in explaining how voter turnout in local elections affects the demographic composition of the electorate (e.g., Hajnal 2010), how local institutions affect voters' choices (e.g., Trounstine 2017), and also how those institutions affect the demographic composition of city councils (e.g., Crowder-Meyer et al. 2015; Karnig and Welch 1980). Another major focus of this literature is the incumbency advantage and retrospective voting, in which the outcome to be explained is incumbent vote share (Berry and Howell 2007; Burnett and Kogan 2016; Hopkins and Pettingill 2017; Trounstine 2011). As productive and informative as this research has been, however, it has paid

almost no attention to what *organized groups* do in local elections, nor has it explored any *public policy* implications of election outcomes.

There is also work that focuses on local policies and policy processes, but it tends not to examine the role of elections specifically. Consider the local political economy literature, most of which seeks to explain variation in public spending, and most of which explores independent variables related to race, ethnicity, and political party. There is a fairly large literature how racial and ethnic diversity and segregation affect spending on public goods (e.g., Alesina et al. 1999; Hopkins 2009, 2011; Rugh and Trounstine 2011; Trounstine 2016, 2018), and also on how constituent race and ethnicity predicts satisfaction with local government service provision (e.g., Marschall and Shah 2007; Hajnal and Trounstine 2014). Others have studied how the race or party affiliation of mayors affects public spending (Gerber and Hopkins 2011; Hopkins and McCabe 2012; de Benedictis-Kessner and Warshaw 2016) and the relationship between citizens' policy views and public spending (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014). These studies are more explicitly focused on explaining local policy, although usually only public spending patterns (see Trounstine 2018 for an important exception). However, they do not provide a theoretical or empirical account of the role local elections play in affecting these outcomes, nor do they explain what place organized groups have within the local political economy.

Another research literature that is focused on local policy and policy processes is that of urban politics tradition. At the heart of the urban politics literature is the idea that business interests have a powerful influence over city policies on economic development and land use. For example, Peterson (1981) argues that because business' interests in growth and development are aligned with local officials' need to grow the tax base, business can pursue its growth interests in local politics with minimal opposition and obstruction. Logan and Molotch (1987) argue that local government is run by "growth machines"—also rooted in the idea that business and growth interests have structural power in local politics. And a central argument in the vast literature that has grown out of Stone's (1989) regime theory is that local government in many large cities is run by a stable coalition of public and private (mainly business) actors, that local policy is made through collaboration and informal negotiation within that governing regime, and that historically these privileged coalitions promoted growth at the expense of neighborhoods and minority groups (e.g., Judd and Swanstrom 1998; Dreier, Mollenkopf, and Swanstrom 2004; Mossberger and Stoker 2001, Stone 2005). This, then, is a literature that has long been focused on local policy, and one that also puts interest groups—at least business and growth interests—center stage.

That said, the urban politics tradition does not provide an explicit account of how local elections shape the policymaking process or interest group influence. Some of the urban politics literature's downplaying of local elections is perhaps justified by its theoretical arguments: if policy is made by a stable governing coalition of businesses and city officials—all of whom have an unwavering interest in growth—then local elections might not be all that important (see, e.g., Peterson 1981). But the fact of the matter is that local elections *do* take place, voters *do* participate, and organized groups *are* involved. If most local policy decisions are made through informal, smoke-filled-room negotiations between businesses and city officials, that then raises a puzzle: why do so many organized groups bother to get active in local elections?

Recent work in the urban politics literature has embraced the idea that local politics is not (or is no longer) universally about growth and development (see, e.g., Horak et al. 2015) and also that groups other than businesses are often involved—even if in a fragmented, inconsistent fashion. Notably, there are newer studies of local sustainability and climate policy that

emphasize the importance of environmental interests (Feiock et al. 2014; Portney and Berry 2010; Sharp et al. 2011) and neighborhood and homeowner associations (see, e.g., Heberlig et al. 2014; Ramirez de la Cruz 2009; Berry 2010)—all productive developments. As it stands, however, this newer work still does not focus on local elections. It also rarely measures interest group activity directly, instead relying on crude proxies such as the income or educational attainment of city residents.

Why, then, is there so little research on whether and how organized groups shape local policy through their activity in local elections? The answer almost certainly has to do with the data challenges I described in earlier chapters. It is very difficult to acquire even basic data on local elections, such as votes for each candidate, let alone measures of the activity of interest groups in local elections. And how does one determine whether election outcomes are favorable to a particular interest group? There are no existing datasets of the policy positions of local candidates and officials (such as roll call votes), and local candidates' party affiliations are unlikely to be a helpful proxy. Most municipalities have nonpartisan elections, and while scholars have nonetheless gone to great lengths to code the party identification of mayoral candidates (e.g., Ferreira and Gyourko 2009; Gerber and Hopkins 2011), it is rare for the top two contenders in a city to be a Democrat and a Republican (de Benedictis-Kessner and Warshaw 2016)—raising questions about whether national political party affiliation is a key distinguishing feature between candidates in most local contexts. Even in city races where the top contenders *are* a Republican and a Democrat, the literature reaches mixed conclusions about whether the party difference leads to meaningful differences in local policy. Thus, for a study of interest group influence in local elections, not only is it difficult to determine which groups were active, but it is also not straightforward to create measures of whether the election outcomes were more or less favorable to any such groups.

Some existing research simplifies matters by studying ballot measures or by putting the emphasis on the effects of electoral institutions. With ballot measures, voters are making policy directly and on a single issue, and so with some reasonable assumptions about groups' preferences over ballot measure outcomes, one can test whether election outcomes are more or less favorable to particular groups under certain electoral conditions (e.g., Rugh and Trounstine 2011; Kogan et al. 2018; Meredith 2009, Dunne et al. 1997). Another approach is to collect data on policies in a large number of local governments and test whether policies are more or less favorable to certain interest groups under particular electoral conditions (see Anzia 2014; Berry and Gersen 2009; Trounstine 2013). What is missing from this work, however, are direct measures of interest group activity in elections, and also direct measures of whether interest groups are electing the candidates they favor. As a result, the conclusions from the existing work have more to do with how electoral institutions shape policy than about how the amount or type of interest group activity shapes local election outcomes.

Studies that both 1) measure interest group activity in local elections and 2) analyze dependent variables related to local public policy—which is what interest groups are after—are therefore few and far between. One example of such work is a study by Anzia and Moe (2015), in which we establish that when police and firefighter unions endorse candidates in city elections, cities tend to spend more, on average, on police and firefighter compensation. Moe's (2005, 2006) studies of teacher union activity and influence in school board elections are another example. In one study, he shows that the effect of a teacher union's endorsement on a candidate's likelihood of winning a school board election is not only positive but also as large as the effect of incumbency (Moe 2006). In a second study, he surveyed California school board

candidates to learn about what teacher unions do in school board elections and measure the relevant policy positions of the candidates; he finds that in districts where teacher unions are more active in school board elections, the winning candidates' policy positions are friendlier to teacher unions (Moe 2005).

These studies serve as examples of how research on local interest groups' electoral influence can be done, in spite of the obstacles. They also show that in this small set of cases studied, interest group electoral activity *does* influence election outcomes and policy, and the effects appear to be substantively large—as large as the incumbency advantage that has been such a focus of existing research on local elections. Thus, the local elections literature that ignores interest groups may well be missing a major contributor to who wins and who loses, and the local politics literature that ignores elections is probably overlooking a key avenue by which interest groups influence policy.

Data

To evaluate whether interest groups' activity in local elections is associated with election outcomes in the groups' favor, I rely on the same dataset that I used in the last two chapters: data from an internet survey of city council and mayoral candidates who ran for office either in November of 2015 or 2016. The survey asked candidates about the interest groups and political parties active in their recent elections, and it also asked the candidates for their opinions on common local policy matters.

I designed the survey based on a series of both practical and theoretical considerations. On the theoretical side, I first wanted to include candidates from different regions of the United States, recognizing that the interest group environment and the local policy context are different in states like Georgia than in states like New York. Second, I sought variation in city size, so that candidates from both small and large cities were represented. And third, I wanted to include cities with both partisan and nonpartisan elections as well as off-cycle and on-cycle elections because I expect those institutions to potentially affect the degree and nature of interest group influence.

The main practical considerations had to do with the challenges of identifying local governments that were having elections, getting the names of candidates running in those elections, and finding email addresses for those candidates. As I have shown in previous work, municipal elections in the U.S. are held at many times throughout the year, and oftentimes states do not track when their own local governments hold elections. Therefore, I focused my study on states where I knew that a large number of municipal elections are held either in November of odd-numbered years or November of even-numbered years. Of those, I placed priority on the states where state or county governments provide lists of the candidates and election results for municipal governments.

Table 1 summarizes the key information about the states included in the survey. The first wave of the survey, fielded in the spring of 2016 and focused on the November 2015 election, included Indiana, South Carolina, Washington, Ohio, and some cities in California. The second wave, fielded in the spring of 2017 and focused on the November 2016 elections, included Arkansas, Oregon, Kentucky, Rhode Island, and other cities in California. Of the nine states, Arkansas, California, Oregon, and Washington have all nonpartisan municipal elections, Kentucky and South Carolina have almost all nonpartisan elections (but a few partisan), Ohio

and Rhode Island have a mix of partisan and nonpartisan municipal elections, and Indiana has all partisan elections.

Of the nine states, the only one that provided email addresses for most of its municipal candidates was Washington. In five others—Arkansas, California, Ohio, Oregon, and South Carolina—the official candidate lists only sometimes provided candidate email addresses, and in the remaining three (Indiana, Kentucky, and Rhode Island), no email addresses were provided. For all candidates without email addresses provided on the official lists, I had a team of research assistants visit the cities' websites after the elections to collect the email addresses of the candidates who won. The research assistants also conducted simple internet searches for existing candidate campaign websites that might include emails. The upshot is that for some states, such as Washington, California, and South Carolina, I had emails of a large number of both winning and losing candidates, whereas for others, such as Indiana, Oregon, and Kentucky, most of the email addresses I had were for winning candidates only.

Altogether, I sent the survey to 6,811 individual candidates in 1,414 unique municipal governments. See Table 2 for details. The individual response rate for both waves of the survey was 15%, and I received at least one response from 49% of the cities in the sample. Not all respondents answered all items, and so in what follows, the sample size varies depending on the specifics of what is being analyzed. Also, the number of small municipal governments in the U.S. is much larger than the number of large municipal governments, and the same is true in my dataset: 301 of the 696 cities in the resulting dataset have fewer than 10,000 residents, 150 have between 10,000 and 25,000 residents, 115 have 25,000 to 50,000 residents, 84 have between 50,000 and 100,000, and 46 cities are larger than 100,000 residents. Finally, because California has many more large cities than the other states, the set of larger cities in the dataset is heavily weighted toward California. For example, 34 of the 46 cities with more than 100,000 people are in California, as are 63 of the 84 cities with 50,000 to 100,000 people.

Most importantly, though, the dataset resulting from this survey provides a unique opportunity to assess whether interest groups manage to shape local election outcomes in their favor. Using the measures of local interest group and political party electoral activity analyzed in the two previous chapters, I can test whether the activity of certain groups is associated with the election of candidates with favorable policy views. In so doing, I can begin to assess whether all of this group activity makes a difference to local policy.

Descriptive Analysis: Local Candidates' Positions on Local Issues

For an area as understudied as this, there are many possible places to begin, but my initial goal is to provide a broad overview of whether groups have influence in the issues areas that are salient in the largest number of municipal governments. For this reason, I focused my questions to the candidates on three general policy areas: economic development, housing, and public safety. These are all areas in which municipal governments large and small tend to make decisions, and they are issues on which the most active local interest groups—chambers of commerce, developers, and public safety unions—have large, direct, economic interests at stake.

Economic development is a natural place to start because of its importance in local politics and its centrality to the urban politics literature. But what are local candidates' positions on economic development? Is there even meaningful variation to explore? It could be that all candidates for local office are committed to economic development and growth because it is the main tool they have to grow the local tax base (Peterson 1981; Logan and Molotch 1987)—putting them in general alignment with the local business community. However, recent

scholarship has argued that the local politics of growth is more fluid and variable than it once was (e.g., Horak et al. 2015), and it is also not clear whether the universal pursuit of economic growth is a prediction that has ever traveled well to smaller municipal governments (see Oliver 2012). Consideration of the interest group environment also suggests that candidates may sometimes disagree about economic development: environmental groups are sometimes active in local politics, and as Berry (1999) has shown, in national politics, these citizen groups are often effective in countering the efforts of business and industry. For all of these reasons, there may be interesting variation in local candidates' views on economic development and growth.

To explore this, I asked city candidates three questions about their perceptions of how economic growth would affect their community: "If your city were to attract more investment and economic development in the coming years, what do you consider the most likely effects on…" Candidates were asked how it would affect city government revenue, city government costs, and the quality of the community, and for each question, the response options were increase, decrease, and no effect. I summarize the responses at the top of Table 3. There is near unanimous agreement that economic development would increase city revenue (94%), but there is more variation in the responses to the other two questions. 67 percent reported that economic growth would increase local government costs, indicating that most see a potential downside to growth and expansion. As for how it would affect the quality of the city community, most but not all were positive: 78% said growth would increase the quality of the community, 9% said it would have no effect, and 13% said it would decrease the quality of the community. Thus, nearly all of these city candidates agree that more economic development would be good for the tax base, but there is some disagreement about whether it would be desirable overall.

I also asked two questions that more explicitly mention possible tradeoffs to pursuing more economic growth. First, I asked respondents if they think their city should focus more on economic growth or more on environmental sustainability, with response options on a five-point scale. Second, I asked them whether their city should focus more on protecting existing conditions or more on attracting development, with four possible response options.

As I show in Table 3, 43% of the city candidates said their city should focus more on economic growth, with 31% saying much more and 12% saying somewhat more. 43 percent of respondents chose the neutral response. But 14% said their city's focus should be more on environmental sustainability than growth. Moving to the next row, I show that 20% said the city should focus much more on protecting existing conditions rather than growth, and 19% said the city should focus somewhat more on protecting existing conditions. Thus, while pro-economic development positions are overall more common in this sample, a non-negligible share of the candidates lean more toward environmental sustainability and protecting existing conditions.

Another major issue in local politics is property development and zoning, and so I also asked the candidates a set of questions about the desirability of increasing the local housing supply. Here, too, the literature does not point to clear predictions about the patterns we should see. If a "growth machine" dominates local politics, perhaps most candidates should tend to favor the expansion of housing (Logan and Molotch 1987), which is clearly good for growth interests. Yet a considerable political economy literature suggests that local homeowners resist developments that stand to negatively affect their property values—and that these NIMBY impulses are a major impediment to expanding the housing supply (Fischel 2001). Considering these potential forces together, then, there might be substantial variation in candidates' views on building housing.

To explore this, I asked the local candidates a three-step question, similar to the first questions about economic development: If their city were to increase the supply of housing, what do they consider the most likely effects on city revenue, city costs, and the quality of the city community?" As I show in Table 3, 78% of respondents indicated that increasing the supply of housing would increase city costs, and 78% said it would have no effect on city revenue. On the question of how it would affect the quality of the city community, however, responses were more divided. The majority—59%—said increasing the housing supply would increase the quality of their community. But 24% said it would decrease the quality, and 17% said it would have no effect. When it comes to expanding the city's housing stock, then, candidates' views do vary—especially their views on how it would affect the quality of the local community.

Compared to economic development and housing, eliciting candidates' views on public safety is more complicated. Economic development and housing are issues on which it is reasonable to think that some candidates want more and others want less, and the questions to the candidates could be designed in that way. Public service provision is different. Presumably few candidates—at least the ones hoping to succeed—would take the position that there need to be lower levels of fire protection or less refuse collection.[1] Instead, concerns about public service provision are often budgetary, about the allocation of scarce resources, about whether the effectiveness of or need for a service justifies the spending, and perhaps, for some, about the desirability of smaller government generally. There may also be debates about *how* public employees provide services; for the police, for example, there are questions about racial profiling, use of force, whether and how officers are held accountable to the public, and whether officers should wear body cameras. The bottom line is that the basic characteristics of public service provision as a policy area are different than those of land use and development (see, e.g., Wilson 1995, Anzia and Moe 2017), and so designing questions to gauge candidates' positions on service provision issues is less straightforward.[2]

I therefore took a two-pronged approach to measuring candidates' positions on public safety. In a first set of questions, I asked candidates for their views about spending on the fire department in their city. One question allowed respondents to indicate that "Increasing spending would make the fire department more effective," "the fire department is effective enough at current spending levels," or "the fire department would be just as effective at lower spending levels." (They could also indicate that their city does not have a fire department.) In a second question, I asked whether they think the money spent on their city's fire department is all well spent or whether some of the money would be better spent on other city priorities.

Returning to Table 3, I find that 28% of the candidates supported greater spending on the fire department, saying that it could be more effective with more spending. 49 percent took the status quo position, saying that the fire department is effective enough at current spending levels. But 9% said that the fire department could be just as effective if spending levels were decreased. On the second question, 61% of respondents said that all of the money spent on fire protection is well spent, and 23% reported that some of the money going to fire protection would be better spent on other city priorities. Overall, then, most of the city candidates are supportive of spending on fire protection, but there is variation in their views.

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[1] For a helpful discussion of these differences across local policy areas, see Trounstine's (2018) discussion of sewer overflows.

[2] I will return to a discussion of the political implications of these policy-area differences later in the chapter.

My second approach was to consider the policy preferences and priorities of key public safety interest groups—police and firefighter unions—and then ask candidates' for their views on those issues. This could be done in a variety of ways, because local government employees and their unions have a large number of important interests at stake in local government, including their compensation, employment levels, the quality of the working environment, and rules governing how they do their jobs. One way of getting at all of these issues at the same time—and assessing how friendly local candidates are to public safety unions' interests overall—is to ask for their opinions on collective bargaining. Collective bargaining is of crucial importance to public-sector unions. When local officials engage in collective bargaining with public-sector unions, the unions are effectively coequal partners in the setting of their salaries, many fringe benefits like health insurance, work rules governing what can be asked of them on the job, and grievance and evaluation procedures. In addition, collective bargaining is important to union organizing, membership, and dues revenue—and thus the political clout of government employees in general. Naturally, then, electing local officials who are supportive of collective bargaining is a priority of public-sector unions. But local candidates' views on collective bargaining need not be uniformly supportive: they may have concerns that it increases government costs, reduces their discretion to manage the public workforce, and results in work rules that detract from effective service provision. This, then, is a second way of assessing whether candidates are friendly to the policy priorities of interest groups on public safety.

To implement this approach, I first asked respondents for their views of the long-term effects of collective bargaining for firefighters on city costs, the quality of fire protection service, and the efficiency of fire protection service. For police, I asked about the likely effects of collective bargaining on city costs, the quality of policing and law enforcement, crime levels, the accountability of the police, and police recruitment and retention. For all of these questions, the response options were increase, decrease, or no effect. For both police and firefighters, I also asked respondents about their general attitude toward collective bargaining, allowing them five response options ranging from very positive to very negative.

The responses to these questions are summarized in Table 3. 78 percent report that collective bargaining for firefighters increases city costs, with most of the remaining respondents saying that it has no effect on costs. Respondents were roughly evenly divided between whether firefighter collective bargaining increases the quality of fire protection service (48%) or has no effect on it (46%). There was a similar divide between whether respondents think collective bargaining improves the efficiency of fire protection, with 44% saying it does, and 46% saying it would have no effect. A slightly larger proportion in this case—10%—said that firefighter collective bargaining decreases the efficiency of fire protection. And respondents' general attitudes about firefighter collective bargaining were mixed: 25% were either somewhat or very negative, 37% were neutral, and the remaining 38% were positive.

For the analogous questions about police, 86% of respondents reported that collective bargaining increases city costs. Most respondents were split between whether police collective bargaining increases the quality of police and law enforcement (49%) or has no effect (41%)—with the remaining 10% saying that it decreases the quality. The majority of respondents—57%—said police collective bargaining has no effect on crime levels, whereas 39% said that it decreased crime. Likewise, there was relative agreement on the effects on recruitment and retention of police officers: 69% of candidates said collective bargaining helps with recruitment and retention, with most of the remaining respondents saying that it has no effect. Respondents were somewhat more divided on the effects of police collective bargaining on the accountability

of the police. 39 percent were very positive, saying it improves accountability, 48% said it has no effect, and 13% say that it decreases the accountability of the police. In terms of their overall views toward collective bargaining, 24% were either somewhat or strongly negative toward it, 33% were neutral, and the remaining 42% were either somewhat or strongly positive.

Given that these are measures of the positions of local candidates for elective office, it is worth asking whether the candidates' views on different issues "go together" in the same way that the positions of national political elites do. Are local candidates' positions on fire protection spending and police collective bargaining correlated with their views on housing or economic development, just like national politicians' views on issues like taxing and spending, gun control, and abortion? Does it look like local candidates' positions or preferences can be arrayed on a single dimension, as many have argued is the case for the preferences of national politicians?

A simple factor analysis helps to answer this question. For all of the policy questions in Table 3, I reorder the responses so that low values mean that the candidate is most negative (toward economic development, housing, and public safety) and high values mean that the candidate is most positive. Then, for all of the questions that ask about the various effects of a policy, I create additive indexes. For the questions about the effects of economic development, for example, I add together the candidates' responses to the questions about city costs and the quality of the city community to create an index that ranges from 0 to 4. (I did not include the responses to the question about revenue because virtually all respondents agreed that economic development would increase city revenue.) For the effects of housing, the index ranges from 0 to 6, with 0 being most negative about increasing the supply of housing and 6 being most positive. For firefighter collective bargaining, I combined the responses about cost, quality, and efficiency in a 0-to-6 index, with 0 being most negative and 6 being most positive. And for police officers, I did the same, and the index ranges from 0 to 10.

Table 4 presents the results of a factor analysis of these variables. Because there are two eigenvalues greater than one, I show the factor loadings for each variable on the first two factors. The variables that load heavily on to the first factor are all of the variables related to public safety—both those about collective bargaining for public safety workers and those about firefighter spending. The variables that load heavily onto the second factor are the questions about economic development and, a bit more weakly, housing. Thus, while some scholars have argued that local-level representation can be assessed on a single dimension (Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014), this analysis suggests that a single dimension would not explain most of the variance on these key local issues. Instead, in focusing on 3-4 issues that are commonly decided by municipal governments, there appear to be at least two meaningful clusters of policy positions among candidates running for city office.

One final descriptive matter is whether the positions of the winning candidates are systematically different than those of the candidates who lost. To make these comparisons, I limit the sample to states where at least a quarter of the respondents lost their elections: California, South Carolina, and Washington. Table 5 shows the results of t-tests for each policy variable, comparing the average responses of losing candidates and winning candidates. Across the board, the winning candidates tend to be significantly more pro-economic growth than the losing candidates, and they are also significantly more pro-housing. In addition, the winners are more supportive of spending on the fire department than the losing candidates. However, there is no such relationship for candidates' views on collective bargaining for police and firefighters: winning candidates are not more likely to view police or firefighter collective bargaining more positively than losing candidates. Therefore, while there is some indication that being pro-

economic growth, pro-housing, and pro-public safety spending are winning positions, there is no bivariate relationship between winning and favorability toward public safety collective bargaining.

Does Group Activity Make a Difference?

I now turn to tests of whether interest group activity is associated with election outcomes, asking: When a group is more active in an election, is the election outcome more favorable to the group? As a first step toward answering this question, I model the policy positions of the winning candidates. Because all of the dependent variables (the policy position variables) are ordinal, I model them with both ordinal logit and OLS, clustering the standard errors by municipality. The OLS estimates are presented here, and estimates from the ordinal logit models are presented in the appendix.

The main independent variables are the interest group activity variables described in the last chapter: each candidate provided a 0-to-4 rating of the activity of several kinds of groups in their most recent city election, where 0 means the group was "not at all active" and 4 means the group was "extremely active." For cities in which more than one candidate responded to the survey, I average their group activity ratings for each individual group.

Local Economic Development

For explaining winning candidates' positions on local economic development, the obvious place to start is with business interests. The literature suggests that the business community as a whole should be strongly supportive of pro-development policies; local chambers of commerce, retail businesses, and developers all have a clear economic stake in their city furthering economic growth. While I have separate electoral activity measures for these three types of groups, their activity is highly correlated,[3] and so in the models, I use one measure of overall business activity: the average of the activity of these three groups within a city. My general expectation is that the electoral activity of business groups should be positively associated with winning candidates having pro-growth views.

That said, the existing literature also suggests that business power in city politics—especially when it comes to growth—is largely structural, because business interests are aligned with the interests of city officials in maintaining and growing the tax base (e.g., Peterson 1981). If business influence is largely built in, it is possible business activity in local elections would make little difference to candidates' positions and election outcomes. That would then beg the question of why businesses bother to be active in local elections—and why their activity appears to vary across cities—but it is worth highlighting the possibility that their electoral activity may not be the most important factor in explaining city candidates' positions on economic growth.

Two other groups whose electoral activity might explain variation in winners' views on economic development are building trade unions and taxpayer groups. The building trades have something at stake in whether the city decides to allow more growth and building, because it is their members—the carpenters, ironworkers, electricians—who might benefit from the jobs such building would create. Taxpayer groups also presumably have an interest in city growth and

[3] The correlation between chamber of commerce and retail business electoral activity is 0.59, and the correlation between developers and chambers of commerce is 0.52.

economic development because expanding economic development would expand the local tax base. Therefore, in addition to business interests, I include the electoral activity of building trade unions and taxpayer groups in the models of economic growth.

Which groups might be a force of opposition to economic growth? Two groups stand out as strong possibilities: environmental groups and anti-growth groups. As Berry (1999) has shown, citizen groups like environmental organizations are often quite effective at countering the efforts of business and industry in national politics, and perhaps the same is true in local politics. As with business groups, the electoral activity of environmental groups and anti-growth groups is highly correlated (at 0.57), and so I take the average of these two variables and include that average in the models of economic growth positions.

A third possible source of opposition is neighborhood associations. As I have said, neighborhood associations are difficult to characterize in any general way, because their functions, organization, and policy priorities probably vary a great deal across communities. In many places, however, neighborhood associations have a reputation for obstructing commercial and residential development (e.g., Logan and Rabrenovic 1990), and so it is possible that they are a force pushing back against economic growth. For this reason, I include their electoral activity in the models as well.

The final group activity variables I include in the economic development models are the activity levels of the two major political parties. As I showed in the last chapter, political parties are often quite active in local elections, even when elections are nonpartisan. That said, it is far from clear how the parties' electoral activity should be related to the winning candidates' positions on economic growth. It is possible that the Republican Party pushes for more pro-growth policies (given its alignments with business groups) and the Democratic Party pushes for slower growth (given its alignments with environmental groups). As I suggested in the last chapter, however, parties may not actually be active in local politics to fight over local policies like economic development—they may be mainly focused on grooming candidates for higher office and building party networks. And so while I do include the activity of the political parties in the model because they are often active in local politics, my expectations about the effects they should have are ambiguous.

While my focus here is on the electoral activity of interest groups and political parties, the local elections literature has so far put the emphasis on other factors such as race, homeowners versus renters, party affiliation and ideology, and city institutions. In modeling the policy positions of the winning candidates, therefore, I also take those factors into consideration.

First, in all models, I include several city-level demographic variables from the U.S. Census. I include the share of city residents who are black and the share who are Latino, although I don't have expectations for how they would be related to winning candidates' policy positions. Also following the literature, I include the share of the city's population that are homeowners as opposed to renters, although again, I do not have clear expectations for what the correlation with candidates' economic development preferences will be. In addition, I control for the log of city population and the percent living in rural areas, because interest group activity is higher in larger cities, and because smaller, more rural cities might be less focused on growth and development. And finally, I control for the log of per capita income, expecting that less affluent cities will place higher priority on economic development.

In addition, I use data available from each state to create a measure of local political leanings based on Democratic presidential vote share from the 2012 election. In some states, I was able to either acquire municipality-level presidential vote share returns or construct them

using precinct-level returns. In other states, however, I was only able to acquire county-level presidential returns, and so for those states, the presidential vote share is for the parent county of the city. Again, however, when it comes to economic development, it is not clear whether more Democratic or more Republican cities should push for different economic growth policies.

I also include several measures of city political institutions as controls. It should be noted, however, that there are few reasons to expect city institutions themselves to influence winners' policy positions. Instead, most of the interesting hypotheses about political institutions have to do with how city institutions affect the electoral strength and influence of certain interest groups and sets of voters—implying that really exploring the effects of institutions calls for interacting them with the city demographic characteristics and interest group activity variables. While this would be a worthwhile exercise, my initial focus here is on whether group activity alone is associated with winning candidates having views more favorable to the group.
For now, then, I simply include several institutional and race-level variables as controls: whether the candidate is running for mayor or council, whether the candidate ran unopposed, whether elections are partisan or nonpartisan, whether council elections are at-large or by district, and whether elections are on-cycle or off-cycle. In all models, I also include fixed effects for states, because both the group environment and views on economic development likely vary by state.

The OLS estimates are presented in columns 1-3 of Table 6. The first finding of note is that the coefficient estimates on business electoral activity are weak and inconsistent across models. When the question to the candidate is phrased in terms of a tradeoff between environmental sustainability and economic growth (column 2), I do find a positive association between business electoral activity and more pro-growth views of the winning candidates. For the other two variables—the perceived effects of economic growth (column 1) and whether the priority should be protecting existing conditions or encouraging growth (column 3), the coefficients on the business activity index are statistically indistinguishable from zero.

The coefficients on the electoral activity of other potential pro-growth groups are also mixed. In column 1, for example, I estimate a positive coefficient on the activity of taxpayer groups, indicating that with more taxpayer group activity, the winning candidates tend to have more positive views of the effects of economic development. But in columns 2 and 3, those effects are not significant. Moreover, in none of the models is the activity of building trade unions statistically significant. Thus, overall, while there are some signs that the activity of pro-development groups influences candidates' positions on economic growth, those signs are weak and not consistent across different measures of candidates' views.

What about the groups potentially opposed to economic development? Here I find one very clear pattern. For every question asked, the activity of environmental and anti-growth groups has a negative relationship with the growth attitudes of winning candidates. In column 1, increasing the electoral activity of these groups from "slightly active" to "very active" (a 2-point change) is associated with a decrease in winning candidates' perceptions of the benefits of economic growth by about 0.4 points on a scale of 0 to 4. The estimates in column 2 show that the same 2-point shift is associated with a downward shift of 0.65 points (also on a scale of 0 to 4) on the question about whether to prioritize sustainability or growth. And in column 3, the same pattern holds. A 2-point increase in environmental group electoral activity makes the winning candidates more likely to say the city should focus on protecting existing conditions.

However, in none of the three models does the activity of neighborhood associations have a clear relationship with winning candidates' attitudes about economic growth. Nor do the party activity variables have clear effects. In column 3, when the question is about protecting existing

conditions or attracting development, Democratic Party activity is actually associated with more pro-growth attitudes among the winners, but all of the other estimates are insignificant. As expected, then, the electoral activity of the two major parties in local elections is not associated with significant differences in the policy positions of winning candidates on local issues.

Of the control variables, a few stand out as having clear relationships with pro-growth attitudes of the winners. The winners in larger cities tend to be more in favor of economic development, consistent with the idea that smaller communities are less focused on attracting business and jobs. While I did not have clear expectations for percent black and percent Latino, the racial and ethnic composition of the city does appear to have a relationship with candidates' views on economic growth: a larger black population is associated with winning candidates having more pro-growth views, while the opposite is true for larger Latino populations.[4] Another clear result is that winning candidates in richer communities are less in favor of economic growth, as expected. In contrast to the effect of Democratic Party activity, more Democratic constituencies tend to have winning candidates that are more in favor of environmental sustainability and protecting existing conditions. And there is no evidence that communities with larger shares of homeowners are less pro-development: in two of the three models, percent homeowner is statistically insignificant, and in column 2, it is actually positive.

Finally, there is some evidence that winning mayoral candidates have views that are more pro-economic development than city council candidates. The positive coefficient on at-large elections in column 3 also suggests that perhaps at-large city council candidates are more pro-growth than candidates running in district elections. On average, candidates running in partisan elections have views that are less favorable toward growth. And throughout, the coefficient on on-cycle elections is insignificant, suggesting that California cities with on-cycle elections do not produce winning candidates with significantly different views on economic growth than winning candidates elected in off-cycle elections.

Stepping back, these patterns of group activity and the positions of the winners are somewhat surprising because they seem to suggest that the electoral activity of business groups matters less for election outcomes than the activity of environmental groups. But it might be a mistake to conclude that therefore business groups are not influencing local elections, for the reasons I alluded to earlier. Chambers of commerce, developers, and businesses are among the most consistently active groups in local elections and local politics generally. Scholars have long recognized that they have a comparatively easy time getting favorable policies made, because their interests are aligned with city officials' interests in growing the tax base. A plausible interpretation of the results in Table 6, then, is that the extent of business activity in elections matters little for the growth views of the winners because business power in local politics is less dependent on what they do in elections. Environmental and anti-growth groups, however, are fighting an uphill battle against the pro-growth impulse of city officials, and so the extent to which they are able to make an impact depends on the extent to which they pose an electoral threat.[5]

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[4] I do not have a good explanation for the latter effect, but it is not one driven by the cities in California: the negative effect of percent Latino holds even when I drop Californian cities from the sample.

[5] Another possibility, which I discuss later, is that business groups get more active in local elections when they face more competition and thus when their interests are more threatened.

Housing

I next turn to a model of the winning candidates' views on building more housing. In many ways, this issue may be similar to questions about economic development. For example, this, too, is an area in which chambers of commerce, local businesses, and developers would seem to have a big stake, and as I showed in Table 4, candidates' views on expanding the local housing supply are related to their views on economic development. But there may also be some important differences between the group politics of economic development and expanding the housing supply that are worth considering in specifying the models and setting expectations.

For the economic development models, for example, I argued for creating a single measure of business interest activity in city elections—combining chambers of commerce, retail businesses, and developers—because all have a big stake in economic development. When it comes to housing, however, it is less clear whether chambers of commerce and retail businesses would put special emphasis on the issue. It is true that creating a business-friendly city probably requires housing, and perhaps then housing is also an area largely dominated by a "growth machine" (Logan and Molotch 1987), but cities in the Silicon Valley have very successfully attracted business and growth without dramatically expanding housing. For developers, however, the economic benefits of expanding housing are direct and strong. Thus, for the model of housing expansion views, I first use the same business activity index as in the economic development models, but then I estimate a second model where I replace the business activity index with just the variable describing developers' electoral activity alone.

Another possible difference here is the expectation for the coefficient on the share of the city's residents who are homeowners as opposed to renters. Fischel (2001) develops a theory in which homeowners are highly active in suburban local affairs because they have a large stake in protecting the values of their homes, which often results in an impulse to resist new developments and limit the supply of housing. Today, a growing political economy literature suggests that local homeowners (and sometimes even renters) resist developments that stand to negatively affect their property values—and thus new housing (Hankinson 2018; Einstein, Palmer, and Glick 2019). Unlike economic development, then, there is a clearer expectation for the coefficient on percent homeowner in these models: if homeowners do care intensely about limiting housing growth, and if candidates are responsive to that, then candidates in cities with more homeowners should tend to have views less favorable to expanding the housing supply.

There may also be differences in the relationship between neighborhood associations' electoral activity and winning candidates' views on expanding the housing supply. To the extent that homeowners are organized into neighborhood associations, neighborhood associations may be the main group force pushing for limiting housing expansion. Along these lines, a study by Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) finds that neighborhood associations often form to oppose land-use developments. Perhaps, then, the activity of neighborhood associations matters more for candidates' views on expanding housing than on economic development.

Other than those considerations, my expectations for the factors influencing housing views are largely the same as those for the economic development variables. Increased electoral activity by taxpayer groups and building trade unions might lead to more housing-friendly election winners. Environmental and anti-growth groups might be effective opposition and lead to winning candidates less favorable to housing. And for the two major political parties, the expectations are again theoretically unclear.

The results of the models for housing are shown in columns 4 and 5 of Table 6. The patterns of results among the group activity variables are similar to those for the economic development models. There is no clear relationship between the activity of businesses overall (column 4) or developers and their associations (column 5) on winning candidates' views on the likely effects of expanding the housing supply. Again, this may seem surprising given that developers have such large economic interests at stake. As with economic development, however, it could be that the default is for winning candidates to be pro-housing, hence the lack of relationship between the extent of their electoral activity and candidates' views.

In the housing models, however, I do find that the activity of taxpayer groups has a significant, positive relationship with winning candidates' support of housing. I also again find a strong negative coefficient on the activity of environmental and anti-growth groups. Thus, as with economic development, one predictor of winning candidates' views on expanding the housing supply is the activity of environmental and anti-growth groups.

Two other patterns are especially important to note in these housing models. The first is the very strong negative coefficient on the share of homeowners in the city. This finding is strongly consistent with what the literature on housing politics and local politics suggests. In this case of housing, much more so than for economic development, there is evidence that homeowners resist development and growth—and that the share of homeowners matters for winning candidates' positions on expanding the housing supply. The second pattern worth highlighting is that the electoral activity of neighborhood associations is *not* associated with the winning candidates' views. This would seem to conflict with existing arguments that neighborhood associations tend to be focused on blocking developments that would negatively affect their property values. It could be that either neighborhood associations are not consistently important forces in local elections (as chapter 4 suggested), or that they are not pushing candidates to adopt general positions against expanding housing. Instead, in the case of housing, it appears that it is the *residents* that matter—how many of them are homeowners—as well as environmental groups.

One takeaway from this analysis of candidates' views on economic development and housing is that group opposition does make a difference. For both issues, one dominant expectation in the local policy literature is that matters of development and land use are largely decided by business, growth interests, and developers. But the effects of business and developer electoral activity in these models are weaker and less consistent than one might expect—a pattern that could reflect the structural (rather than the electoral) influence of business. The pattern that is far and away the strongest in these models is that the electoral activity of the likely opposition to business and growth interests does matter—and is associated with the winning candidates having significantly more anti-growth, anti-housing attitudes. When it comes to economic growth and housing development, then, there very often are two sides competing with one another. And there is strong evidence that the nature of that competition shapes the election outcomes—how favorable the winners are to one side versus the other.

Public Safety

As I started to explain earlier, the group dynamics of public service provision are probably different, but the local politics literature has little to say about that: urban politics and local political economy scholars have tended to focus on the group dynamics of land use and economic development and far less on the group politics of public service provision. Existing

work on local public spending is related to service provision, of course—because much of local spending goes toward service provision—but that research tends to put the emphasis on race, ethnicity, and party affiliation and ideology—not organized groups. And to the extent that more recent work in the urban politics tradition has expanded its focus to study public safety, education, and the interests of "neighborhoods," the discussion so far has characterized the "interests" and groups in these areas (outside of business) as being fragmented, weak, and inconsistent in their political efforts (see, e.g., Horak et al. 2015). From reading this literature, then, one is left with the impression that politics of public service provision and local spending may not involve organized groups.

But there is another body of work that argues something different: the small but growing literature on government employees and public-sector unions.[6] For local governments, some of the clearest and most direct beneficiaries of local government service provision are the government service providers themselves, whose jobs, salaries, benefits, and working environments are created and shaped by local policy on service provision (see, for example, Moe 2011, 2015; DiSalvo 2015). A number of studies now highlight the role that local government employees and their unions play in local politics, ranging from teachers (e.g., Moe 2005, 2006, 2011) to police and firefighters (Anzia and Moe 2015; Anzia 2014) to employees of special districts (Berry 2009). As I showed in earlier chapters, police unions and firefighter unions are among the most active and most consistently active interest groups in municipal governments and in local electoral politics. So the employees are the obvious place to start a discussion of the group politics of public service provision.

The first and most important group activity variables to include in the models of winning candidates' public safety views are the police and firefighter union variables. When it comes to explaining candidates' views on collective bargaining and spending on fire departments, I expect the electoral activity of firefighter unions to make a difference: winning candidates should have more pro-firefighter attitudes when the firefighter unions are more politically active. Similarly, my expectation is that greater activity by police unions in elections is associated with the election winners having attitudes more favorable to the police.

Which groups might we expect to be actively opposed to the goals of firefighter unions and police unions? It is not clear that there will be any—at least not consistent opposition across cities. The reasons are related to the differences between public safety provision and economic development and housing that I alluded to earlier. In the case of land use, housing, and economic development, it is relatively easy to envision groups that would be actively opposed to expansion. When a new building or complex goes up across the road, the public and key stakeholders can see it—and it is easy to understand how it affects them and their interests. Businesses and developers might view the building or complex as in their interest. Homeowners and environmentalists can also clearly see how it affects their home values, neighborhood, and green spaces. With the alternatives so clear and simple—allow the building or block it—these issue areas lend themselves to group conflict and competing sides.

As I explained earlier, public service provision is different; being "opposed" is more complicated. Just as cutting Social Security benefits doesn't make for a winning campaign

[6] As early as the 1960s, Banfield and Wilson (1963) recognized municipal employees as a powerful force in city politics and elections. But today, more than 50 years later, municipal employees are an even more important force, because now (in contrast to during the 1950s) a much larger share of municipal employees throughout the U.S. are members of unions.

platform in national elections, neither should cutting firefighter budgets or reducing garbage collection in municipal elections. Instead, in the case of government service provision, any opposition usually takes the form of arguments about how scarce local government funds should be allocated differently, or about seemingly technical matters such as what makes for good or better policing. For example, it seems unlikely that potential opponents of police practices would argue for shrinking police departments. Instead, they have to grapple with questions about how one makes the police more accountable and how one reduces racial profiling—issues that call for some policy and management expertise. These are less likely to become hot topics in elections than land use or attracting business to an area because the arguments are not just about supporting or blocking something. With these issue differences considered, it is not surprising that land use, economic development, and infrastructure are more often salient issues in local elections than public service provision (see chapter 4).

This has important implications for the group dynamics on service provision issues: they are likely to be areas in which there is a politically active group on one side without any consistent opposition. What groups are the contenders for opposition? One possibility is taxpayer groups: public safety is usually one of the largest budget items in cities, and so perhaps taxpayer groups push candidates to oppose collective bargaining and to lower spending on public safety. For police officers, another possibility is that groups committed to racial justice are active opponents of the police, and so I also include the activity of racial and ethnic minority groups in the model. Other than those two, it is difficult to imagine what the group opponents would be. As before, I also include the activity of the two political parties in the model as well as the activity of neighborhood associations, but I don't have clear expectations for how they would shape candidates' views on public safety.

The estimates for all of the public safety models are shown in Table 7. I start with the two questions about spending on the fire department in columns 1 and 2. In column 2, where the dependent variable is a binary indicator for whether the money spent on the fire department is all well spent (1) or whether some of the money spent on the fire department would be better spent on other priorities (0), the coefficient on the firefighter union activity variable is statistically insignificant. But in column 1, where the question is about the relationship between fire department spending and its effectiveness, I find a very clear effect of the electoral activity of firefighter unions. On average, a 2-point increase in firefighter activity leads to a 0.17-point increase (on a scale of 0-to-2) on the winning candidates' favorability toward spending on the fire department.

In columns 3 and 4, moreover, it is very clear that the electoral activity of firefighter unions is strongly and positively associated with the winning candidates' favorability toward collective bargaining for firefighters. In column 3, a 2-point increase in their activity (such as from slightly active to very active) is associated with a 0.33-point increase in the winning candidates' views about the effects of firefighter collective bargaining, on a 0-to-6 scale. And it is also associated with a 0.4-point increase in candidates' overall favorability to collective bargaining for firefighters on a 0-to-4 scale. Thus, there is evidence that the extent of firefighter activity is positively associated with winning candidates' attitudes being friendlier to firefighters.

The same is true of police officers' activity, although only one of the coefficients on police activity in columns 5 and 6 is significant. In column 5, where the dependent variable is an index of the perceived effects of police collective bargaining, the overall amount of police union activity does not have a significant effect. In column 6, however, it does: a 2-point increase in

the activity of police unions in elections is associated with a 0.28-point increase in winning candidates' favorability to collective bargaining for police.

What of any group opposition to firefighter and police unions? The other group activity estimates in Table 7 suggest there is little such electoral opposition to speak of. In most of the models the activity of taxpayer groups has a negative association with the public safety views of winning candidates, but that negative association is only significant in column 1, which is the question about favorability toward firefighter spending. Neighborhood associations certainly aren't a force of opposition to public safety; the coefficient in column 6 (for police collective bargaining favorability) is actually positive. In the models related to the police, the activity of racial and ethnic minority groups has no association with winning candidates' pro-public safety views. And the effects of political party activity are not consistent across models. Thus, while the effects of police and firefighter union activity are generally strong and consistent, that is not the case for any of the other group activity variables.

Of the city and candidate characteristics, really the only variable that has a clear relationship with winning candidates' views on public safety spending and collective bargaining is per capita income: overall, winning candidates in less affluent cities have more favorable views toward public safety spending and collective bargaining. But all in all, the finding that stands out is that the activity of public safety unions is positively associated with the winners having more favorable views toward public safety unions.

Alternative Explanations

One glaring concern with the analysis so far is that in explaining variation in the positions of the winning candidates using these interest group activity variables, perhaps I only see relationships between the two because I have not accounted for important characteristics of the cities that explain both. Endogeneity concerns could take a number of forms in this case. For example, perhaps some cities just have residents who are more pro-environment than residents in other cities. That could explain why the winning candidates are more pro-environment (either because they emerge from a pool of pro-environment residents, or because they are pro-environment in response to residents) and why environmental groups are more active (because there is a larger constituency of environmentalists for such groups to organize).

Another possibility is that it is the city's policies that shape the group activity, and that the causal effect runs in the other direction. Indeed, as I have argued in earlier chapters, if we want to predict the kinds of groups active in local politics, we should start by thinking about what policies the cities make—and which groups have a large direct economic stake in those policies. For the analysis presented here, the concern would be that some cities have friendly environmental policies and thus pro-environment officials who made them, and that it is the policies themselves that spurred the environmental groups into more electoral action—not the activity of the group that's shaping the policies.

This is a possibility, but it should not be overstated. My arguments about how policy predicts group activity in earlier chapters was not one about how *friendly* policies make a group more active. It was simply that if a city government makes policies on land use, for example, then groups interested in land use (such as developers) should tend to be more active because they have something at stake. In other words, it is about whether the city makes decisions in that issue area, not about whether the existing policies on the books are more or less friendly to a group. The same is true for public safety. In chapter 2, I showed that police and firefighter

unions are significantly more active in city politics when the city provides police and fire protection service—not that they become more active as city officials make policy increasingly friendly to them.

Actually, it is far from obvious that an interest group *should* be more active as a city makes policy friendlier to it. One could just as easily make the opposite argument. If a city makes decisions on land use (as most do), and an environmental group sees the city's decisions as increasingly anti-environment, perhaps that would provoke it to become *more* active in local elections. After all, a standard concern in the literature on interest groups is that the strongest groups might not have to be as actively involved, and that high levels of electoral activity by a group can actually be sign of weakness. This possibility—that the group activity coefficients are biased downwards—seems just as likely as the possibility that they are biased upward.

Even so, the concern about endogeneity is a real one, and so in two sets of analyses, I attempt to test whether the relationships shown in Tables 6 and 7 are simply a product of certain cities being more favorable to certain groups. In the first approach, I run the same models as in Tables 6 and 7 on the candidates who *lost* their elections. The general idea is that if it's just unobserved city-level characteristics that account for the link between group activity and the policy friendliness of the winners, then those same city-level characteristics should also make the losing candidates friendlier to the groups. For example, if the activity of environmental groups in a city is associated with *all* candidates being more pro-environment, even the losers, then that would suggest that we are seeing something about the *city* at play rather than a successful attempt of environmental groups to elect pro-environment candidates. If, however, the electoral activity of environmental groups explains the winning candidates' views but not those of the losing candidates, then that would suggest that the environmental group is having an effect on the election outcome.[7]

As a second approach, I analyze the magnitude and direction of any differences between the views of winning and losing candidates within the same city. While I only have the reported policy positions of both winning and losing candidates in 76 cities, this small sample may well prove informative. How big are the differences between the views of winning and losing candidates within the same city? And, more importantly, as an interest group's activity increases, is it more likely to elect the candidates with the more favorable policy views? I turn to these questions in the analysis to follow.

Policy Positions of Losing Candidates

Table 8 presents the estimated coefficients of the group activity variables when the economic development and housing models are run on the losing candidates in the dataset instead of the winning candidates. (Here, to save space, I show only the model estimates for the group activity variables, but all of the same variables—except the indicator for unopposed candidate—are included here.) The pattern of results is quite telling. While the coefficients on business activity and developer activity are insignificant except for column 2, they are negatively

[7] This is not a fool-proof approach, however, because it is entirely possible that an influential interest group could persuade *all* candidates in a city contest to be friendlier to its goals, even the ones who eventually lose. The results of models that look only at the losing candidates' positions may therefore turn up positive group activity coefficients even if it is true that the interest groups are influential.

signed, and indeed, in column 2, business activity is significantly associated with *less* pro-growth attitudes among the losing candidates. It therefore does not appear that the coefficients in Table 6 are simply reflecting pro-growth tendencies of certain cities, because if that were the case, we would see it in the losing candidates as well. If anything, the negative coefficients on the business activity variables suggest that business interests might be more active when there are less business-friendly candidates in the race.

Equally important are the null effects for environmental and anti-growth group activity as well as for taxpayer groups. While in Table 6 I found strong relationships between environmental group activity and the growth views of winning candidates, here I find no such relationship for the losing candidates. Based on this analysis, then, it does not appear that the results in Table 6 are driven by unmeasured characteristics of cities that would explain variation in the positions of both winning and losing candidates.

In Table 9, where I present the coefficient estimates for the group activity variables in models of the losing candidates' views on public safety, I again find a pattern of insignificant coefficients. In no case is the activity of firefighter unions positively associated with the positions of losing candidates on firefighter spending or collective bargaining. The coefficients are not only imprecise (which we should expect given the smaller number of losing candidates in the sample) but also very small and close to zero. For police unions' activity on the police-related policy views, the coefficient estimates are actually negative (although insignificant). Overall, then, based on this simple analysis of the losing candidates' views, it does not look like the relationships between the group activity variables in Tables 6 and 7 are driven by unobserved characteristics of the cities, such as the underlying views of residents on growth and public service provision.

Positions of Winning and Losing Candidates in the Same City

As a second way of testing for these alternative explanations, I compare the positions of winning and losing candidates within the same cities. Doing this limits my analysis to a much smaller set of cities: for example, there are only 76 cities in which my survey dataset includes responses from both winners and losers on the question about whether to prioritize economic growth or environmental sustainability. Still, for this smaller set of cities, I can explore whether there are differences in the positions of the winning and losing candidates, and I can test whether the activity of the various groups in their elections is associated with the successful election of the candidates with the more favorable views.

I first calculate the average position of the winning candidates and the average position of the losing candidates for each policy question and each city. Then for each city and policy question, I calculate the difference between the average position of the winners and the average position of the losers. Table 10 displays the summary statistics for each of these variables. Both the magnitude and direction of the differences in winners' and losers' views varies across cities. In some cities, there is little to no difference in the winning and losing candidates' positions on these issues; the median for all variables is 0. In many others—the ones with positive values on these variables—the candidates with the views more favorable to economic development, housing, and public safety won. In other cities, the values are negative, indicating that candidates less favorable toward economic development, housing, and public safety won their elections.

In what follows, I test whether the activity of the relevant interest groups in a city's elections explains this variation. Because I am dealing with such a small number of cases here—the city is the unit of analysis, and only cities with both winners' and losers' positions are included—I only include the group activity variables and state fixed effects as predictors. (When I add the remaining predictors, however, the results are substantively the same.)

Table 11 presents the estimates of the models for the economic development and housing variables. Starting first with economic development (columns 1-3), the weight of the evidence suggests that greater activity by environmental and anti-growth groups *is* associated with the winners being the less pro-development candidates. In column 3, the coefficient is not significant, but in columns 1 and 2, I find that as the electoral activity of environmental groups increases, the winners are increasingly more skeptical of economic development than the losers. I also find persistent effects of taxpayer groups in the other direction: the more active taxpayer groups are in the elections, the more the winners are the ones more favorable to economic development. Once again, the effects for business are inconsistent. In column 2, I find that more business activity is associated with the winners being more pro-development than the losers. But the same is not true for the other two economic development variables in columns 1 and 3. And if anything, it looks as though greater activity by neighborhood associations in elections is associated with the winners being *more* pro-economic development than the losers.

For the questions about the desirability of expanding the housing supply, the results are murkier. It does appear that increasing activity by taxpayer groups is associated with winners being more pro-housing than the losers. Interestingly, there is also evidence here that as building trade unions become more active in elections, the winners are also more pro-housing compared to the losers. But there is no evidence that as business or developers become more active in elections that the winning candidates are more favorable toward increasing housing. In fact, the coefficient on developers' activity in column 5 is negative. Environmental activity, moreover, is not a significant predictor of who wins in this case. And two of the variables that one might expect to lead to the election of anti-housing candidates—neighborhood association activity and percent homeowners—are actually associated with the winners being more *pro*-housing than the losing candidates.

The findings of this winner-loser comparative analysis are clearer for the public safety variables, as shown in Table 12. In columns 1 and 2, even though there are only 57 and 53 cities in the analysis, respectively, I find that greater electoral activity by firefighter unions is associated with the winning candidates being more favorable toward fire department spending that the losing candidates. There is also some evidence that greater electoral activity by firefighters is associated with the winners having overall more favorable perceptions of the effects of collective bargaining for firefighters (column 3), even if it is not the case that the winners are generally more prone to liking firefighter collective bargaining overall (column 4). And in column 5, I find that greater electoral activity of police unions is associated with the winning local candidates having much more favorable views of the effects of police collective bargaining than the losing candidates. In column 6, the effect of police activity is not significant, but to find such a consistent pattern with such a small number of cases is quite telling. It does not appear to be the case that the main results in Table 7 are just being driven by unobservable characteristics of the cities. Instead, when there are two candidates with different views on public safety policy, the likelihood of the winners being the more pro-safety candidates increases with the electoral activity of public safety unions.

Discussion

In this chapter, I have estimated models of local candidates' policy views that account for variation in local interest group activity, demographics, institutions, and political leanings across cities in the U.S. This is a fundamentally different approach to studying local politics than what currently exists in the local politics literature. And the basic findings here suggest that a reorientation of the way local politics is studied may be in order. Interest groups are not only active in local elections, but they appear to shape election outcomes. For the three issue areas studied here—economic development, housing, and public safety provision—the policy positions of the winning candidates are more favorable to the groups that are involved. And it does not appear that these effects are merely driven by unobservable differences across the cities. Overall, when an interest group is more active in a city's elections, it is more successful in electing the candidates with the friendlier views.

One of the advances here—a step beyond both the existing local politics literature the broader interest group literature—is that I have actually measured how active interest groups are in local elections in a large number of municipal governments. Almost certainly one of the main reasons why so little research has studied local interest groups is that there are no existing datasets of their activity, nor is it possible to just go city to city to assemble data on interest group activity. The measures I have constructed are far from perfect, but they are a big step forward from no measures at all. And even with these less-than-perfect measures, I've uncovered evidence that variation in the level of group electoral activity does make a difference to election outcomes.

A second advance is related to where I have looked for evidence of interest group influence in elections—what the dependent variables are. The existing measures in the literature are inadequate for this purpose. Incumbent vote share, for example, doesn't tell us about whether the candidates are friendly to interest group goals. Public spending is very much a policy outcome, but it is not the direct product of elections, and it only captures a part of what local governments do. The case-based approach of most urban politics scholars has allowed for in-depth assessment of policies and outcomes in particular cities, but not in a way that allows for tests of the conditions under which groups are influential, and mainly with a focus on economic development. And standard proxies for policy positions, such as candidate political party, are far less useful and often not possible to use in the local context. To test whether the variation in the level of group activity makes a difference to election outcomes, I asked hundreds of local candidates for their views on relevant local policy issues, which are also the issues of greatest interest to the most active groups in local elections.

This is the most appropriate way to look for evidence of interest group influence in local elections, because it is focused on the individuals who are elected (or not) and the policies the interest groups care about. But much more can and should be done. By asking just a few questions about a small number of issues, I have only begun to scratch the surface. One could do an entire study of candidates' views on economic development, housing, policing, spending, or public service provision. And these are just a few of the topics that are relevant in local government. My hope is that scholars continue along this trajectory and collectively produce a more complete picture of the policy dynamics of local government—and the role interest groups, political parties, and voters play in shaping local election outcomes. The result will be a much richer and more accurate account of how things work in local government—and a picture that is

focused clearly on how local policy is or is not different than what it would be if interest groups were less involved.

This initial study provides a first and provocative glimpse at what is possible—and at what we have been missing with "groupless" approaches to understanding local elections. It suggests that not only are interest groups often active in local elections, but also that when they are, they tend to influence the election outcomes in their favor.

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Table 1: States included in local election survey

	Election year	Partisan or nonpartisan	Source of candidate lists and election results
Arkansas	2016	Nonpartisan	Counties
California	2015 and 2016	Nonpartisan	Counties
Indiana	2015	Partisan	Secretary of state
Kentucky	2016	Mostly nonpartisan	Secretary of state
Ohio	2015	Mixed	Counties
Oregon	2016	Nonpartisan	Counties
Rhode Island	2016	Mixed	Secretary of state
South Carolina	2015	Mostly nonpartisan	Secretary of state
Washington	2015	Nonpartisan	Secretary of state

Table 2: Number of individual respondents and cities

	Candidates	Cities	Cities, <10K	Cities, 10-25K	Cities, 25-50K	Cities, 50-100K	Cities, >100K
Number contacted	6811	1414	767	278	172	130	67
2015 election	3745	785	497	152	80	40	16
2016 election	3066	629	270	126	92	90	51
Number responded (complete and partial)	1040	696	301	150	115	84	46
2015 election	573	375	194	85	59	22	15
2016 election	467	321	107	65	56	62	31
Arkansas	30	23	11	5	4	3	0
California	343	218	28	44	49	63	34
Indiana	103	62	28	14	13	4	3
Kentucky	50	41	31	7	3	0	0
Ohio	208	138	65	44	23	4	2
Oregon	54	41	32	3	4	2	0
Rhode Island	44	27	8	13	4	2	0
South Carolina	58	38	24	7	3	2	2
Washington	150	107	74	13	12	4	4
Total response rate (complete and partial)	15%	49%	39%	54%	67%	65%	69%
2015 election	15%	48%	39%	56%	74%	55%	94%
2016 election	15%	51%	40%	52%	61%	69%	61%

Table 3: Candidates' responses to local policy questions

Effects of economic development on….	Increase	Decrease	No effect		
City revenue	0.94	0.02	0.04		
City costs	0.66	0.1	0.24		
Quality of city community	0.78	0.13	0.09		
Focus more on economic growth or environmental sustainability?	Much more growth	Somewhat more growth	Equal	Somewhat more sustain.	Much more sustain.
	0.31	0.12	0.43	0.07	0.07
Focus on protecting existing conditions or attracting development	Much more protect	Somewhat more protect	Somewhat more attract	Much more attract	
	0.15	0.2	0.38	0.27	
Effects of increasing housing supply on…	Increase	Decrease	No effect		
City revenue	0.11	0.11	0.78		
City costs	0.78	0.08	0.14		
Quality of city community	0.59	0.24	0.17		
What do you think about spending on the fire department in your city?	More spending	Enough spending	Lower spending	No fire dept.	
	0.28	0.49	0.09	0.14	
Do you think the money spent on your city's fire department is…	All well spent	Other priorities	No fire dept.		
	0.61	0.23	0.16		
Effects of collective bargaining with firefighters on…	Increase	Decrease	No effect		
City costs	0.78	0.04	0.18		
Quality of fire protection service	0.48	0.06	0.46		
Efficiency of city fire protection service	0.44	0.1	0.46		
Attitude toward collective bargaining for firefighters?	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Neutral	Somewhat negative	Very negative
	0.17	0.21	0.37	0.17	0.08
Effects of collective bargaining with police on…	Increase	Decrease	No effect		
City costs	0.86	0.05	0.09		
Quality of policing and law enforcement	0.49	0.1	0.41		
Crime	0.04	0.39	0.57		
Accountability of police	0.39	0.13	0.48		
Police recruitment and retention	0.69	0.04	0.26		
Attitude toward collective bargaining for the police?	Very positive	Somewhat positive	Neutral	Somewhat negative	Very negative
	0.18	0.24	0.33	0.16	0.08

Table 4: Factor loadings based on principal components analysis

	Factor 1	Factor 2
Effects of economic development index	0.08	0.51
Environmental sustainability or development	-0.05	0.61
Protect existing conditions or development	0.07	0.62
Effects of expanding housing supply index	0.17	0.43
Effectiveness of fire department spending	0.55	0.06
Is all spending on fire department well spent	0.45	0.01
Effect of firefighter collective bargaining index	0.7	-0.004
General attitude toward firefighter collective bargaining	0.82	-0.15
Effect of police collective bargaining index	0.74	0.04
General attitude toward police collective bargaining	0.81	-0.09

Table 5: Comparing the policy positions of winning and losing candidates

	Effects of economic development index	Sustainability or growth	Protect conditions or growth	Effect of increasing housing index
Losing candidates	1.78	2.25	1.42	2.36
Winning candidates	2.09	2.47	1.86	2.73
Difference	-0.307	-0.226	-0.439	-0.379
p-value	0.0021	0.0469	0.0000	0.0026

	Effectiveness of fire dept. spending	Fire dept. spending well spent	Fire CB effects	Fire CB attitude	Police CB effects	Police CB attitude
Losing candidates	1.12	0.64	3.07	2.43	5.71	2.37
Winning candidates	1.28	0.76	2.92	2.25	5.72	2.3
Difference	-0.155	-0.119	0.148	0.184	-0.01	0.071
p-value	0.0268	0.0132	0.257	0.0979	0.9632	0.5404

Table 6: Winning candidates' positions on economic development and housing

	Effects of economic development	Environmental sustainability or growth	Protect conditions or growth	Expand housing supply	Expand housing supply
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Business	0.049	0.148	0.009	0.022	
	(0.073)	(0.085)	(0.068)	(0.078)	
Developers					-0.04
					(0.058)
Taxpayer groups	0.131	0.1	0.069	0.119	0.125
	(0.055)	(0.062)	(0.055)	(0.067)	(0.065)
Building trade unions	-0.02	-0.076	-0.035	0.063	0.069
	(0.052)	(0.056)	(0.051)	(0.057)	(0.057)
Environmental & anti-growth groups	-0.196	-0.326	-0.194	-0.204	-0.192
	(0.062)	(0.068)	(0.052)	(0.076)	(0.075)
Neighborhood associations	-0.014	-0.014	0.038	0.018	0.035
	(0.049)	(0.052)	(0.045)	(0.058)	(0.058)
Democratic party	0.02	0.012	0.119	0.045	0.049
	(0.045)	(0.053)	(0.043)	(0.052)	(0.052)
Republican party	0.012	0.032	-0.038	0.05	0.059
	(0.042)	(0.053)	(0.040)	(0.046)	(0.047)
Ln(population)	0.024	0.128	0.109	-0.087	-0.074
	(0.039)	(0.049)	(0.041)	(0.044)	(0.044)
% Black	0.664	1.701	1.082	1.445	1.394
	(0.444)	(0.581)	(0.464)	(0.591)	(0.581)
% Latino	-0.783	-1.001	-0.172	0.182	0.188
	(0.361)	(0.415)	(0.331)	(0.470)	(0.462)
% Rural	-0.098	0.077	-0.013	0.016	0.039
	(0.170)	(0.198)	(0.159)	(0.197)	(0.198)
% Homeowners	0.013	1.148	0.55	-2.012	-2.002
	(0.425)	(0.471)	(0.366)	(0.465)	(0.473)
Ln(Income per capita)	-0.763	-1.019	-1.01	-0.369	-0.363
	(0.185)	(0.191)	(0.146)	(0.192)	(0.195)
Democratic presidential vote	0.61	-0.926	-0.92	0.382	0.402
	(0.418)	(0.452)	(0.394)	(0.423)	(0.424)
Mayoral candidate	0.072	0.275	0.255	0.012	-0.011
	(0.121)	(0.159)	(0.122)	(0.166)	(0.167)
At-large council candidate	-0.087	0.127	0.197	-0.041	-0.031
	(0.106)	(0.134)	(0.113)	(0.132)	(0.133)
Unopposed candidate	-0.112	-0.089	0.011	-0.112	-0.096
	(0.091)	(0.115)	(0.089)	(0.119)	(0.120)
Partisan elections	-0.258	-0.097	-0.458	-0.008	-0.006
	(0.139)	(0.197)	(0.166)	(0.203)	(0.201)
On-cycle elections	-0.358	0.334	0.156	-0.426	-0.424
	(0.340)	(0.240)	(0.231)	(0.272)	(0.271)
R-squared	0.17	0.24	0.29	0.21	0.21
Observations	549	548	538	541	542

Notes: Standard errors clustered by city in parentheses. All models include state fixed effects.

Table 7: Interest group electoral activity and the public safety views of winning candidates

	Fire dept. spending effectiveness	Fire dept. funding well spent	Effects of firefighter CB	View of firefighter CB	Effects of police CB	View of police CB
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Firefighter unions	0.084	0.014	0.165	0.2		
	(0.031)	(0.022)	(0.054)	(0.052)		
Police unions					0.107	0.148
					(0.107)	(0.066)
Taxpayer groups	-0.101	-0.031	-0.091	-0.098	0.025	-0.107
	(0.046)	(0.029)	(0.086)	(0.071)	(0.121)	(0.076)
Neighborhood associations	0.046	-0.008	-0.005	0.085	0.096	0.105
	(0.034)	(0.024)	(0.061)	(0.055)	(0.100)	(0.058)
Racial and ethnic groups					0.065	0.082
					(0.134)	(0.071)
Democratic party	-0.058	-0.029	0.043	0.1	0.243	0.088
	(0.035)	(0.024)	(0.064)	(0.061)	(0.088)	(0.055)
Republican party	0.069	0.031	0.098	-0.029	-0.06	-0.073
	(0.035)	(0.023)	(0.059)	(0.054)	(0.089)	(0.056)
Ln(population)	-0.049	-0.032	-0.134	-0.057	-0.08	-0.043
	(0.029)	(0.022)	(0.061)	(0.049)	(0.092)	(0.052)
% Black	-0.077	-0.182	-1.044	-0.151	1.318	0.393
	(0.484)	(0.306)	(0.918)	(0.626)	(0.942)	(0.638)
% Latino	-0.046	0.111	-0.693	-0.244	-1.859	0.05
	(0.283)	(0.222)	(0.547)	(0.423)	(0.869)	(0.429)
% Rural	-0.081	0.022	-0.273	-0.3	-1.051	-0.558
	(0.119)	(0.084)	(0.245)	(0.183)	(0.343)	(0.181)
% Homeowner	0.488	0.208	0.367	0.251	1.405	0.752
	(0.274)	(0.225)	(0.636)	(0.513)	(0.937)	(0.557)
Ln(Income per capita)	-0.259	-0.071	-0.579	-0.469	-1.271	-0.522
	(0.116)	(0.082)	(0.236)	(0.203)	(0.359)	(0.207)
Democratic presidential vote	0.544	0.339	0.551	0.745	-0.634	-0.015
	(0.315)	(0.199)	(0.646)	(0.534)	(0.822)	(0.014)
Mayoral candidate	0.087	-0.001	0.1	0.1	0.159	0.014
	(0.105)	(0.066)	(0.214)	(0.181)	(0.284)	(0.177)
At-large council candidate	0	-0.072	0.169	0.121	0.037	0.070
	(0.082)	(0.056)	(0.167)	(0.152)	(0.243)	(0.145)
Unopposed candidate	-0.021	-0.085	0.152	0.005	0.478	0.009
	(0.068)	(0.050)	(0.143)	(0.116)	(0.213)	(0.114)
Partisan elections	-0.08	-0.133	-0.223	-0.321	-0.078	-0.166
	(0.113)	(0.083)	(0.230)	(0.223)	(0.334)	(0.216)
On-cycle elections	0.079	0.088	0.37	-0.041	-0.442	-0.232
	(0.207)	(0.140)	(0.288)	(0.238)	(0.408)	(0.238)
R-squared	0.1	0.06	0.07	0.14	0.11	0.13
Observations	461	446	495	526	487	516

Notes: Standard errors clustered by city in parentheses. All models include state fixed effects.

Table 8: Losing candidates' views on economic development and housing

	Effects of economic development	Environmental sustainability or growth	Protect conditions or growth	Expand housing supply	Expand housing supply
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Business	-0.105	-0.224	-0.148	-0.142	
	(0.107)	(0.122)	(0.099)	(0.132)	
Developers					-0.073
					(0.088)
Taxpayer groups	-0.069	-0.064	0.018	-0.163	-0.173
	(0.086)	(0.114)	(0.088)	(0.140)	(0.141)
Building trade unions	0.003	-0.049	-0.011	-0.04	-0.038
	(0.074)	(0.086)	(0.076)	(0.092)	(0.093)
Environmental & anti-growth groups	0.084	0.065	-0.008	0.153	0.164
	(0.101)	(0.106)	(0.089)	(0.119)	(0.116)
Neighborhood associations	-0.064	-0.05	-0.093	-0.03	-0.052
	(0.093)	(0.124)	(0.091)	(0.100)	(0.097)
Democratic party	0.184	0.154	0.068	-0.009	-0.009
	(0.085)	(0.089)	(0.077)	(0.113)	(0.113)
Republican party	0.103	-0.059	0.089	0.189	0.188
	(0.081)	(0.093)	(0.083)	(0.108)	(0.108)
R-squared	0.24	0.29	0.29	0.24	0.24
Observations	214	217	213	214	214

Notes: Standard errors clustered by city in parentheses. All models include the variables from earlier table as well as state fixed effects.

Table 9: Losing candidates' positions on public safety

	Fire dept. spending effectiveness	Fire dept. funding well spent	Effects of firefighter CB	View of firefighter CB	Effects of police CB	View of police CB
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Firefighter unions	0.001	-0.027	0.026	0.005		
	(0.054)	(0.038)	(0.092)	(0.079)		
Police unions					-0.135	-0.064
					(0.176)	(0.104)
Taxpayer groups	-0.041	-0.045	-0.123	-0.118	-0.086	-0.149
	(0.063)	(0.051)	(0.104)	(0.092)	(0.214)	(0.133)
Neighborhood associations	0.013	0.029	-0.003	-0.065	0.079	-0.017
	(0.057)	(0.042)	(0.110)	(0.085)	(0.196)	(0.101)
Racial and ethnic groups					0.019	0.027
					(0.205)	(0.121)
Democratic party	-0.018	-0.003	-0.012	0.099	-0.121	0.03
	(0.053)	(0.038)	(0.102)	(0.086)	(0.179)	(0.107)
Republican party	-0.038	-0.015	0.119	0.099	-0.021	0.045
	(0.054)	(0.034)	(0.124)	(0.088)	(0.183)	(0.097)
R-squared	0.08	0.1	0.08	0.16	0.07	0.14
Observations	188	186	203	211	187	200

Notes: Standard errors clustered by city in parentheses. All models include the same variables as in the earlier table, including state fixed effects.

Table 10: Summary statistics, winning candidates' positions minus losing candidates' positions

	Min	Max	Mean	Median	SD	N
Effects of economic development index	-4	4	0.08	0	1.44	75
Prioritize growth or environment	-4	4	0.1	0	1.73	76
Protect existing conditions or growth	-3	3	0.25	0	1.35	75
Expanding housing supply index	-3	3.5	0.2	0	1.44	75
Fire dept. spending and effectiveness	-1.5	2	0.12	0	0.79	57
Fire dept. funding well spent	-1	1	0.06	0	0.54	53
Firefighter collective bargaining effects index	-4	4	-0.03	0	1.73	67
General attitude toward firefighter CB	-4	4	-0.16	0	1.52	71
Police collective bargaining effects index	-6	6	0.1	0	2.83	56
General attitude toward police CB	-4	4	-0.21	0	1.63	63

Table 11: Within-city differences in winning and losing candidates' positions

	Effects of economic development	Environmental sustainability or growth	Protect conditions or growth	Expand housing supply	Expand housing supply
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Business	0.03	0.509	0.07	-0.249	
	(0.240)	(0.224)	(0.222)	(0.253)	
Developers					-0.285
					(0.159)
Taxpayer groups	0.321	0.305	0.421	0.382	0.348
	(0.187)	(0.194)	(0.189)	(0.223)	(0.213)
Building trade unions	-0.165	0.17	0.002	0.275	0.301
	(0.187)	(0.147)	(0.170)	(0.139)	(0.132)
Environmental & anti-growth groups	-0.534	-0.471	-0.117	-0.192	-0.19
	(0.182)	(0.226)	(0.169)	(0.200)	(0.199)
Neighborhood associations	0.417	0.56	0.41	0.37	0.397
	(0.223)	(0.249)	(0.223)	(0.179)	(0.173)
% Homeowners				2.13	2.333
				(1.298)	(1.311)
R-squared	0.22	0.37	0.23	0.2	0.22
Observations	75	76	75	75	75

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. Unit of analysis is the city. Dependent variables are the average of the winners' positions minus the average of the losers' positions for each question in each city.

Table 12: Within-city differences in winning and losing candidates' positions

	Fire dept. spending effectiveness	Fire dept. funding well spent	Effects of firefighter CB	View of firefighter CB	Effects of police CB	View of police CB
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Firefighter unions	0.27	0.105	0.322	0.03		
	(0.085)	(0.057)	(0.180)	(0.183)		
Police unions					0.708	0.174
					(0.404)	(0.255)
Taxpayer groups	-0.249	0.018	-0.238	-0.097	-0.267	-0.516
	(0.123)	(0.106)	(0.284)	(0.263)	(0.587)	(0.288)
Neighborhood associations	0.107	-0.137	-0.303	0.05	0.145	-0.004
	(0.141)	(0.085)	(0.362)	(0.262)	(0.650)	(0.329)
Racial and ethnic groups					-0.29	0.405
					(0.429)	(0.317)
R-squared	0.3	0.25	0.11	0.03	0.08	0.14
Observations	57	53	67	71	55	62

Notes: Robust standard errors in parentheses. Dependent variable is average winning candidates' position minus average losing candidates' position.