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Lorrie A. Frasure and Michael Jones-Correa

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# The Logic of Institutional Interdependency: The Case of Day Laborer Policy in Suburbia

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Lorrie A. Frasure<sup>1</sup> and  
Michael Jones-Correa<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

This article challenges public choice and regime theory interpretations of constraints on local politics, developing instead the institutional logic behind coalitions of local institutional actors designing redistributive policies addressing immigrant newcomers in increasingly diverse suburban jurisdictions. Employing qualitative data from a data set consisting of over 100 in-depth interviews among state and local elected and appointed officials, and community-based leaders in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, the authors find that elected officials, bureaucrats, and nonprofits partner to gain additional leverage to overcome suburban NIMBY problems such as those associated with day labor workers. These partnerships develop for at least three reasons: (1) they give community-based organizations (CBOs) access to resources available in the public sector; (2) for public agencies, these alliances lower the transaction costs associated with overcoming language and cultural barriers between newcomers and existing residents; and (3) these partnerships allow local bureaucrats to minimize outlays of their scarce resources to deal with the problems associated with the demographic shifts taking place in suburbia by essentially outsourcing much of the effort to nonprofit organizations while still allowing local bureaucrats and the elected officials who control

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<sup>1</sup>University of California, Los Angeles

<sup>2</sup>Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

## Corresponding Author:

Lorrie Frasure, University of California, Los Angeles, Department of Political Science, 3278  
Bunche Hall, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1472

Email: [lfrasure@polisci.ucla.edu](mailto:lfrasure@polisci.ucla.edu)

their budgets to take credit for the programs these organizations initiate, maintain, and staff.

### Keywords

immigration, suburbs, day labor, NIMBY, institutional interdependency, public choice, regime theory

As immigrants and racial/ethnic minorities in the United States move to suburbs in unprecedented numbers, governmental actors in suburban jurisdictions increasingly find themselves adjudicating the use of public goods between immigrants and nonimmigrants. Day labor sites are a prime example of this kind of adjudication, with local governments often helping to set up non-profit day labor sites with public funds (del Carmen Fani 2005; Chishti 2000; Espenshade 2000; U.S. General Accounting Office [GAO] 2002; Gordon 2005; Maher 2003; Price and Singer 2008; Sassen 1995, 2000; Valenzuela et al. 2006; Valenzuela and Melendez 2003; Valenzuela 1999, 2000; Waldinger and Lichter 2003; Waldinger 1999). However, the reallocation of public funds to pay for the needs of disenfranchised immigrants seems to run counter to theories of local political economy (Tiebout 1956; Peterson 1981). Moreover, it seems odd that local elected officials and bureaucrats would play this role in the first place, given the often-hostile reception to these policy interventions, which intersect with community concerns about immigration, race/ethnic relations, unemployment, the use of public space, and—most centrally—the appropriate role of government in the provision of local public goods and services. How do local actors benefit from entering into alliances to implement potentially controversial policies? This article addresses these questions through a case study exploring the intersection of suburban institutions (bureaucratic and nonprofit) and immigrant incorporation in the United States around day labor issues in the Washington, D.C., suburban areas of Montgomery County, Maryland, and Fairfax County, Virginia.

There are extensive debates about the proper role of governmental and nongovernmental actors in the provision of local public goods and services, and these debates only become more heated when discussing local responses to the needs and demands of immigrants, particularly if these immigrants are (whether in reality or simply in perception) undocumented. In the past, CBOs—charitable, religious, and others—have often stepped in to address the needs of new urban arrivals (Harris 1999; Gittell, Ortega-Bustamante, and Steffy 1999; Frazier, Margai, and Tettey-Fio 2003; Frasure and Williams 2009). These interventions followed the pattern observed by those who,

like de Tocqueville (1835/2000) in his *Democracy in America*, saw in the American penchant for voluntary associations a way for society to surmount the inadequacies of relying solely on private markets and government responsiveness to augment the short supply of local public goods and services. However, whatever the merits of voluntary cooperation to overcome the shortcomings of democratic governance, in *The Logic of Collective Action* Olson (1965) observed that in many instances there remains a divergence between what individuals want and what they are able to achieve as a group. Rational actors will prefer to free ride and let others pay the cost of a public good that will, in any case, benefit everyone. An individual must be forced by some kind of institutional mechanism to abandon *individual* net benefit maximizing behavior to realize the *collective* benefits of a local public good.

Selective incentives to cooperate or “work collaboratively” are often manifested through government interventionist strategies (i.e., government regulations, civil rights legislation, etc.), and this intervention is often justified by pointing to the failures of private markets to effectively provide goods and services to those who cannot provide for themselves. However, public choice theorists have suggested there may be limitations to governmental intervention, particularly at the local level. According to such scholars, local governments are sensitive to competitive economic pressures from their peers and are unlikely to engage in redistributive policies that would place them at a competitive disadvantage (Peterson 1981). In this view, localities attempting redistributive programs (paying for these through local taxation) may find that businesses and individuals will move to a jurisdiction with lower taxation (with higher income residents more likely to move), so that residents in local jurisdictions will sort out by local taxation regimens, according to class (Tiebout 1956; Buchanan 1971; Bish 1971; Peterson 1981; Miller 1981; Schneider 1989). This logic suggests that local governments would be both unlikely and foolish to engage in redistributive spending. Moreover, in the absence of selective incentives to contribute, high-income groups will engage in redistribution only if they derive some benefit from doing so or, more unlikely, to the extent that they are altruistic.

Economic spatial sorting models, like Tiebout’s (1956), originally described the policy outcomes that developed largely after the Second World War, when federal distributive dollars flowed more readily to develop and maintain the economic (and consequently the racial/ethnic homogeneity) of suburban neighborhoods. During this era, the practice of economic sorting among politically fragmented suburban areas, aided by exclusionary zoning, racial covenants, and other *de jure* and *de facto* racial sorting policies (Danielson 1976), helped to keep more prosperous suburban jurisdictions largely exempt from the redistributive pressures expressed in urban electoral politics. Just as

these formal and informal barriers began to weaken and suburban jurisdictions were becoming more racially/ethnically and economically diverse, the “new federalism” of the 1980s led to severe cuts in federal aid to localities, resulting in even fewer incentives for suburban governments to implement redistributive policies. The absence of any new large-scale federal grants to localities in the two succeeding decades suggests that any great resurgence of federally funded redistributive programs to address affordable housing, greater employment, and educational opportunities for lower income residents, including immigrants, in suburban jurisdictions is highly unlikely.

The primary alternative to political economy interpretations of local spending have come from urban regime theorists who argue against the notion of a “unitary interest of the city” and of an economic development imperative as emblematic of that unitary interest. Instead, they suggest that local governments are also constrained by a political logic whereby public officials need to build and maintain electoral coalitions sufficient to both win office and to govern (Stone 1989, 1998; Sanders and Stone 1987a, 1987b; Swanstrom 1988). As Schneider (1989, 23) points out, unlike the policy making process outlined in the Tiebout model, “in a democratic society, the market forces of citizen/consumer sovereignty is reinforced by the norms of government responsiveness to the interests and demands of its citizens and by the various electoral processes that enforce these norms.” Regime theory scholars argue that based on the dynamic nature of urban regime structures, the economic reductionism of the political economist camp is unrealistic and apolitical. In the view of regime theorists, electoral politics matter and economic imperatives must be weighed against the necessity for elected officials to build and sustain broad electoral coalitions—efficiency (economic growth) versus equity (redistribution)—in a delicate balance between the two (Swanstrom 1988; also see Ross and Levine 2006, chap. 4).

The conclusion one might draw based on the arguments presented by these two approaches is that (1) redistributive programs of any kind are unlikely in the fragmented, competitive contexts of metropolitan areas in the United States, and even less likely after the cuts to intergovernmental transfers from the federal government to states and localities in 1980s, and (2) even if any redistribution were to occur it would be the result of electoral pressures as elected officials sought to maintain their governing coalitions. However, these theories fail to explain the mechanisms that drive contemporary suburban jurisdictions to work with CBOs to provide goods and services to foreign-born residents in the absence of either outside funding that would allow redistributive spending (as would be expected by public choice theories) or electoral pressures from voters acting as part of electoral coalitions (as

<b>Elected Officials</b>	Political leaders have fiscal resources but may lack political will (ex. financial capital)
<b>Bureaucrats</b>	Bureaucrats may have the will but may lack fiscal resources—nevertheless, hold institutional resources (ex. facilities space and human capital)
<b>Community-Based Organizations</b>	CBOs may lack institutional resources yet have an intimate relationship with immigrant community (ex. social capital)— which can help lower language and cultural barriers

**Figure 1.** Institutional actors in suburbia

predicted by regime theorists). In implementing programs to address the needs of their increasingly demographically diverse populations, institutional actors in these suburban jurisdictions are seemingly acting counter to their locality’s economic development interests and the interests of the upper income populations who are still their principal electoral constituents. If this is the case, the implication is that both public choice and urban regime theories require some reexamination.

### **Institutional Interdependency in Suburbia**

To explain these apparently incongruous policies, the analysis presented here departs from aspects of both public choice and regime theory approaches. Our analysis begins with the assumption that each set of local actors—elected officials, bureaucratic agencies, and nonprofit CBOs—holds certain tangible and intangible resources at their disposal, which are outlined in Figure 1. Each of these sets of actors may wish to respond to the increased presence of immigrants in their localities, but each faces costs in implementing any response.

For instance, when it comes to allocating local public goods and services, elected officials on the county council hold the purse strings in suburban jurisdictions. Through budgetary line items they have, for example, the power to shift funding from “magnet” or “talented and gifted” programs to English as second language (ESOL) programs in suburban schools, to provide more funding for translation services at government agencies, or to provide financial support to some CBOs over others. However, while suburban demographics have changed rapidly as the result of immigration, the composition of the voting-eligible population has not changed nearly as

quickly. This fact may hinder the political will of political leaders to act to address the interests and concerns of immigrant newcomers. In his study of Congress, David Mayhew (1974) contends that elected officials are single-minded seekers of reelection, achieved in large part via "position-taking" on select issues (see also Fiorina 1977), taking advantage of credit-claiming opportunities, often via pork barreling and other distributive programs (also see Fenno 1973). These views imply that elected officials may serve as less than perfect representatives of those constituents who do not, or are not able to, vote. Politicians are unlikely to be rewarded by voters to shifting public resources to address immigrant issues, and may well be punished if they do.

Bureaucratic actors, for their part, are responsible for providing local public goods and implementing programs and services that directly affect the day-to-day lives of suburban newcomers. Bureaucrats are often thought to be budget maximizers (Niskanen 1971; also see Downs 1957), which implies that given available resources, local bureaucrats will respond to demands or needs of residents. However, when their principals—in this case state and local government elected officials—lack the political will to act with regard to the concerns facing immigrant newcomers, bureaucratic agencies are often left without the fiscal resources to address the needs of increasingly ethnically and racially diverse immigrant populations. Nevertheless, bureaucrats still hold both tangible and intangible institutional resources ranging from human capital resources (e.g., professionalized service and regulatory staff with technical expertise) to facilities (e.g., meeting space at the city or county buildings). Finally, CBOs often have an intimate relationship with immigrant and ethnic minority communities. These nonprofits often act to lower the transaction costs associated with overcoming language and cultural barriers between newcomers and native-born residents (Wong 2006) but often operate on tight budgets and small professional staffs.

The distinct interests of each of these three sets of actors and the differing costs they face underscore the difficulties for collective action in addressing redistributive issues such as day labor in suburbia. Public choice theory emphasizes the difficulties encountered for any kind of collective action and the temptation for actors to defect or to free ride when asked to contribute to public goods. Regime theory explains redistributive policies largely as responses to electoral pressures. The case study here illuminates a possibility for an *institutional* logic to resolving collective action problems, outside of direct electoral politics. In this scenario, redistributive public policies come about because of the strategic interplay of local public and nonprofit institutions. Building on mutually beneficial relationships, political leaders, bureaucrats, and nonprofits

acquire additional leverage to address a range of problems associated with immigrant newcomers in a changing suburban landscape.

Based on the case study data, we find that in dealing with the NIMBY (not in my backyard) problems raised by issues such as the proposed siting or implementation of day labor sites, bureaucratic actors are unlikely to act alone, instead turning to nonprofit CBOs as partners. Local bureaucrats and CBOs find it in their mutual interest to build interdependent relationships for at least three reasons: (1) these associations give CBOs access to programmatic funding and resources available in the public sector; (2) for public agencies, these alliances lower the transaction costs associated with overcoming language and cultural barriers between newcomers and existing residents; and (3) these partnerships allow local bureaucrats to minimize outlays of their scarce resources to deal with the problems associated with the demographic shifts taking place in suburbia by essentially outsourcing much of the effort to nonprofit agencies while still allowing these agencies, and the elected officials who control their purse strings, to take credit for the programs these CBOs initiate, maintain, and staff. In short, elected officials, bureaucrats, and nonprofits mutually benefit through their partnerships, gaining additional leverage to overcome the NIMBY problems associated with addressing day labor concerns and other quality of life issues in suburbia. We elaborate on these findings below.

## The Data

The evidence for the analysis presented here is drawn from a variety of sources including local media as well as governmental and nongovernmental publications. However, our primary data consist of 114 in-depth interviews collected in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area over a 14-month period, from June 2003 to August 2004.<sup>1</sup> These interviews were conducted with state and local elected and appointed representatives, bureaucratic service and regulatory agency officials, and CBO leaders (both immigrant and nonimmigrant) based on multiple-entry snowball sampling, a technique facilitating access to respondents, such as local elites, who may be difficult to identify and/or interview. Initial respondents were selected as key actors for their roles as elected or appointed officials, public school and county government officials, or CBO leaders. Once a list of initial contacts was drawn up, each interviewee provided a means of identifying further contacts in the respondent's social networks (Jones-Correa 1998; Vogt 1999). Unlike densely populated urban areas, the dispersed geography of suburbia and the need to easily and efficiently access the social networks of respondents (particularly



**Table 1.** Montgomery County Racial/Ethnic Origin Composition, by Percentage

Race/Ethnic Origin	1980	1990	2002
Non-Hispanic White	85.6	76.7	64.8
Non-Hispanic Black	8.8	12.2	15.1
Hispanic	3.9	7.4	11.5
Non-Hispanic Asian	3.9	8.2	11.1
Other	0.5	2.7	5.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980, 1990, 2002).

racial/ethnic actors) made snowball sampling a sensible sampling framework (Thomson 1997). In fact, the circle of public, private, and nonprofit actors directly or indirectly related to immigrant and ethnic minority settlement became more finite and tightly linked as the snowball sampling proceeded over the time in field.<sup>2</sup>

## The Case Study: Institutionalizing Day Labor in Suburbia

By 2000, the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area population ranked 7th among the 10 largest metropolitan areas in the United States receiving immigration. Metropolitan Washington's foreign-born population grew by 70% in the 1990s to nearly 350,000 immigrants in 2000 (and up from only 127,579 in 1970) (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). Of the Washington, D.C., population, 61% are racial/ethnic minorities, while 41% of its suburban population are racial/ethnic minorities (Frey 2003, 175, Table 9A-1). These demographic patterns are particularly pronounced in the two most populous counties in the Washington, D.C., suburban area, Montgomery County, Maryland, and Fairfax County, Virginia. Table 1 presents the racial and ethnic origin composition in Montgomery County since 1980. It indicates that while the proportion of the county's non-Hispanic White population decreased from 86% in 1980 to 64% in 2002, both the Asian and Hispanic populations in the county increased dramatically, from 4% in 1980 to 11% and 12% in 2002, respectively. The African-American population in Montgomery County increased, though to a lesser degree, from 9% in 1980 to 15% in 2002.

A similar demographic shift has taken place in northern Virginia's Fairfax County. Table 2 shows that while the non-Hispanic White population decreased from 86% in 1980 to 62% in 2002, Asian and Hispanic populations in Fairfax County soared, from 4% and 3%, respectively, in 1980 to 15% and 12% in 2002. However, note that the African-American population in Fairfax County increased only marginally, from 6% to 8%, over that same period.

**Table 2.** Fairfax County Racial/Ethnic Origin Composition, by Percentage

Race/Ethnic Origin	1980	1990	2002
Non-Hispanic White	86.2	77.5	62.2
Non-Hispanic Black	5.8	7.6	7.8
Hispanic	3.3	6.3	12.3
Non-Hispanic Asian	3.8	8.3	15.0
Other	1.0	0.3	2.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (1980, 1990, 2002).

These demographic changes have introduced a host of new actors and new issues into suburban politics. This case study examines the way institutional interdependencies play out as institutional actors attempt to address the immigrant low-wage labor market in suburbia—the day laborer population. Borrowing from Valenzuela and Melendez, a day laborer is defined here “as someone who gathers at a street corner, empty lot or parking lot of a home improvement store (e.g., Home Depot), or an official hiring site, to sell their labor for the day, hour or for a particular job” (Valenzuela and Melendez 2003, 1). Valenzuela and Melendez refer to three types of day laborer pick-up and drop-off sites: *connected*—sites connected to some industry such as painting, landscaping or gardening, moving, or home improvement; *unconnected*—sites lacking a connection to a specific industry; and *regulated*—“formal hiring sites either controlled by the city or county or managed by a community-based organization” (Valenzuela and Melendez 2003, 4). Our analysis primarily focuses on attempts by local suburban jurisdictions to manage day labor by creating regulated sites, or what are referred to here as “institutionalized settings” for day labor.

Two factors make day labor a particular issue of concern and contention in both urban and suburban jurisdictions. The first is that day laborers are particularly vulnerable workers in the labor force. Recent studies find that in this often “underground economy,” “day laborers have an informal relationship with the labor market, often working for different employers each day, being paid in cash, and lacking key benefits, such as health or unemployment insurance” (GAO 2002, 1); also see Kelleberg, Reskin, and Hudson 2000; Valenzuela and Melendez 2003; Valenzuela 1999, 2001; Homeless Persons Representation Project [HPRP] and CASA de Maryland 2004; del Carmen Fani 2005; also see the list of studies generated by the National Day Laborers Organizing Network).<sup>3</sup> The GAO’s 2002 report on day labor working conditions found that such laborers are routinely subject to hazardous work environments and workplace abuses by employers. Workplace abuse often includes insufficient payment or nonpayment for services rendered. In addition,

day labor workers are often unable to voice any complaints because of language barriers, lack of legal documentation, and fears of deportation.

The existence of day labor in suburban locations poses a new set of policy issues for local governments and providers of services. While a growing number of sociologists, urban planners, policy makers, and activists have examined the impact and policy implications of this largely immigrant segment of the low-wage workforce (del Carmen Fani 2005; Chishti 2000; Espenshade 2000; GAO 2002; Gordon 2005; HPRP and CASA de Maryland 2004; Maher 2003; Price and Singer 2008; Sassen 1995, 2000; Valenzuela and Melendez 2003; Valenzuela 1999, 2000; Waldinger and Lichter 2003; Waldinger 1999), fewer studies have examined how local receiving institutions respond to the need and demands of this population.

The second is that the increase in the presence of day laborers may have an impact on “quality of life” in suburbs, the set of conditions that makes suburbia an attractive location for many to choose to live. These attributes include, but are not limited to, the perceptions that suburban locations offer lower taxes, better public schools, better amenities and services, greater safety, and more green space. By most accounts, day laborers have resided in parts of both Montgomery and Fairfax counties for nearly 20 years yet had gone largely (or at least officially) unnoticed until the recent stark increase in their numbers and the emergence of new informal and institutionalized day laborer sites.<sup>4</sup> The rise of both informal day labor sites—at which workers wait at 7-Eleven convenience stores or Home Depot home improvement stores for employers to drive by seeking temporary labor—as well as regulated or institutionalized day labor sites funded by public dollars conceivably violates perceived suburban norms regarding the use of both public space and public funds, in addition to raising public safety, health, and other concerns. Clearly, day labor sites are a very visible appropriation of public space by individuals who many residents interpret as having no right to do so. Often, informal day laborer sites raise the ire of local business owners and residents, spurring them to petition their local representatives to ban or move day laborer sites away from their vicinity. Adding fuel to the fire are charges by anti-illegal immigration groups such as the Minutemen Project and the Federation for American Immigration Reform that local governments are misappropriating public dollars to fund services for undocumented immigrants via regulated day laborer centers.

Suburban jurisdictions have handled their informal day laborer pick-up and drop-off sites in various ways. In some places, law enforcement officials are called in to “dismantle” day laborer sites (even if, as some have argued, such tactics are often unfruitful and short lived), while other jurisdictions

have gone as far as outlawing informal day laborers pick-up sites via public ordinances (Espenshade 2000; Calderon, Foster, and Rodriguez 2002). In most cases, however, while suburban residents and business owners often raise an outcry about the “loitering” of day laborers in public spaces and want to see them removed from their immediate vicinity, there is little movement to ban the use of day laborers altogether. Indeed, some jurisdictions have taken steps instead to create formal day labor centers, which designate the utilization of space for the use of day laborers as a job pick-up site, where these workers receive shelter and job assistance and are able to report unscrupulous practices by employers, obtain advocacy support, and, if necessary, obtain restitution through legal channels.

Both instances, however—the relocation of existing informal day labor sites and the creation of formal day labor sites—run into what is often called the NIMBY problem. Residents and business owners may recognize the needs of day laborers but do not wish to see them—literally or figuratively—in their own backyards. There may be support for establishing a more formal labor pick-up site run by the locality, but there is resistance from residents to placing these institutionalized sites in their particular neighborhoods. These issues of contestation over public space, complaints that day laborers are illegitimately utilizing public space and resistance to the location or relocation of either formal or informal day labor sites, have all surfaced in Montgomery County, Maryland, and Fairfax County, Virginia.

In 1991, in response to the increase of day laborers, and with the urging of a local CBO, CASA de Maryland, Montgomery County set up a formal day labor site in Langley Park, Maryland. A second day laborer site has been constructed in Wheaton, Maryland, with the county leasing the space and CASA de Maryland operating the center. In addition to providing shelter for day laborers, CASA provides basic services including English classes, information concerning citizenship, health care, job training, and mediation services between workers and employers.

However, the discussion of institutionalized day labor sites is newer to Fairfax County, and obtaining a location for an institutionalized setting in Fairfax County was met with much greater controversy, particularly in the town of Herndon, Virginia, located in the county. Nonetheless, the growing numbers of day laborers congregating in various informal 7-Eleven day laborer sites throughout Fairfax County raised public safety, health, and quality of life concerns for long-time residents and business owners. The presence of these workers and the complaints their presence has provoked raised the profile of the issue in the county and made it clear there was a need for a more permanent solution to the “day laborer problem” in Fairfax

County. Verdia Haywood, Fairfax County deputy county executive for human services, notes how recent increases in the number of day laborers have raised the issue's profile in Fairfax County:

We got the day laborer issue, and by the way, it is growing significantly in our community. . . . Now if you can't get a driver's license where you drive to work, chances are you are going to have to depend more on things like the day laborer's market. . . . [W]e have seen in just a period of two months a threefold increase in one of the day laborer sites in the number of people going to that site, trying to get access to the economy and earn a living so that they can support their families. . . . A threefold increase. And guess what? That has implications for the businesses in that community. It has implications for the citizens in that community. It has public implications. The whole issue now, for example in our day labor site where the sensitivity to the police involvement has compounded some of the problems that we already have. . . . It's almost like after September 11th . . . [the] level of consciousness about immigration [has] increased dramatically, and when that happens, it [means] that politicians are going to try to do something about it.

Fairfax County took longer to recognize and respond to day laborer issues than Montgomery County, but by the early 2000s the issue had become too visible—and too politicized—to ignore.

In response to these growing concerns, in 2003 Fairfax County conducted a survey of the experiences of day laborers in the county (a smaller-scale survey was also conducted in 2000). Staff from the Department of Systems Management for Human Services, the Department of Community and Recreation Services, and the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department and a member of a Reston Interfaith (a CBO) working as a liaison at the informal day laborer site in Herndon joined together to conduct the survey interviews in Spanish (five).<sup>5</sup> David Ellis, director of the Fairfax County Day Labor Taskforce, remarks,

Looking at just the demographics of Fairfax and recognizing that we have had some rapid demographic changes . . . suddenly some of the issues out in neighborhoods and communities don't necessarily fit in [any] one agency's area. . . . Day labor is a perfect example. . . . For years the police department was the agency that really [was at] the forefront [on this issue], because they were the ones receiving the complaints . . . [but recently] we recognized that it was just more than a

police issue, more than a human services issue, it is really a community issue. You need to have discussion, you need to have representation for the business community, the residents, as well as the day laborers. You needed to find a way to kind of bring folks together and develop some type of consensus on what would be the best approach. . . . The demographic changes in the county . . . [are] not going to go away. . . . [The county's] probably going to have more day labor sites. . . . We currently have four sites, but we probably picked up three of those sites [recently], or they have become more noticeable in the last five years.

These remarks emphasize the heightened visibility of day labor issues in the early 2000s and the realization that the day labor issue was not going to be resolved by any one institutional actor.

Any policy to address day labor is bound to involve multiple local actors—both public and private—entailing the usual complications of collective action. Each suburban sector—elected officials, bureaucrats, and CBOs—holds certain tangible and intangible resources at its disposal. But again, each set of actors also has constraints on these resources. So how and why do they agree to pool their resources? In addition, immigration introduces a new set of issues, like day labor, into suburban politics that require some reallocation of public resources. How is this accomplished? The case study fieldwork underscores the *institutional logic* behind the collective action to address issues that, like day labor, require redistributive policy solutions. Three facets of the logic of suburban institutional interdependency are explored in the pages that follow.

### Three Facets of Institutional Interdependency in Suburbia

On January 31, 2005, a group of Montgomery County public and nonprofit actors held a press conference to discuss the development of the second day laborer site in the county. Standing together with representatives of both public and private institutions at construction site of the Wheaton facility, county executive Doug Duncan announced, “I am confident that this center will build on the success of the county’s first day laborer site in Langley Park. . . . New immigrants have an entrepreneurial spirit and the thirst to work and be productive members of our community, and I am proud to help them help themselves to earn a living and support their families.” Gustavo Torres, executive director of CASA de Maryland, noted in his remarks that “Doug Duncan has made Montgomery County into a national model in responding

sensitively and intelligently to the needs of day laborers” (Montgomery County News Release 2005). County Council president and former CASA board of directors member Tom Perez further noted, “This center renews our commitment to include everyone in Montgomery County’s economic development. . . . The successful partnership between business, government and CASA de Maryland has shown that matching employers and employees in a safe and organized environment benefit families, small businesses, and the community. The rising tide of . . . redevelopment must lift all boats to succeed” (Montgomery County News Release 2005), sentiments echoed by Maryland State Delegate Ana Sol Gutierrez (Montgomery County News Release 2005). Clearly, the range of political figures involved indicates a significant degree of political backing, at least in Montgomery County, for initiatives and coalitions with the nonprofit sector to address day labor issues.

These initiatives are, however, hardly inevitable, and—as evidenced by the voter revolt against a city-sponsored day labor site in Herndon, Virginia, which resulted in a mass sweep of the local lawmakers who had approved the program from office in 2006—not uncontroversial or costless. So how do these interdependent relationships between these institutions and the actors evolve, and what lends them stability, allowing them to persist over time? Building symbiotic relationships among public and private institutions, political leaders, bureaucrats, and nonprofits agencies generates additional leverage to address issues such as the NIMBY problems associated with day labor concerns.

### *Interdependency Increases Access to Resources*

One of the main benefits for suburban nonprofits to form symbiotic relationships with local governments is their access to resources. CBOs are often reliant not only on direct funding from local governments but also on bureaucratic agencies that hold institutional resources (e.g., meeting spaces, photocopiers, distribution materials, etc.) that can reduce overhead costs for these CBOs.

Given the resources at stake, it is in the interests of local nonprofits to cultivate good relationships with local governmental actors since these relationships translate into access, and access can translate into resources. For instance, Elmer Romero, the director of education for CASA de Maryland, details CASA’s relationship to the local government, particularly Montgomery County executive Doug Duncan and Prince George’s County executive Jack Johnson:

Duncan is always in touch with this organization, and when we need him for any specific issue, he will be open-minded to hear and try to

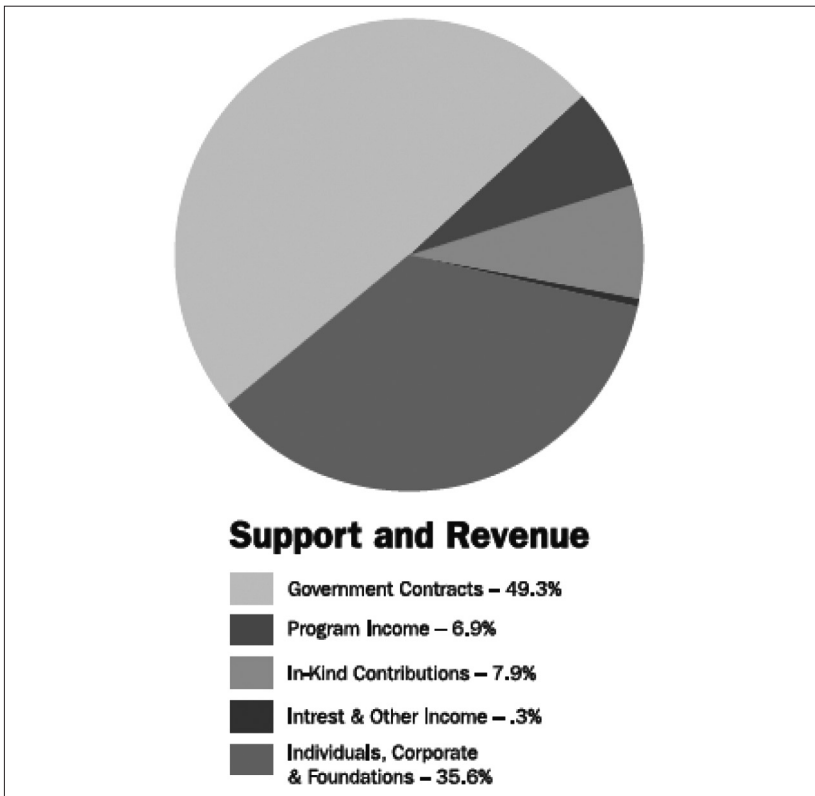
get some solution. In addition, [the county will] provide money to resolve a specific issue. For example, they support this employment center, because they support the day laborer's central issues, and in addition, for education, I've received some money through the county to develop, for example, literacy classes in Spanish, literacy from the ESOL program, and for citizens [citizenship training]. So the county, really, is a real support for us. But, obviously, it depends, [on] who is the executive, because now, [with] Jack Johnson in Prince George's . . . we have good relationship, but in the past, the last executive, the relationship [was not nearly as good] . . . because, they were not comfortable with immigrants, or they not, I would say, probably they were not really sensitive about this issue. But now, the relationship with all two of them, Duncan and Jack Johnson, is really good. And they are in touch with us, and for example, they support us in new legislation, when we have this anti-immigration bill, they went with us, to support us, to Annapolis, and talk to the media, and support immigrants.

When the relationship with local government executives is a good one, it can mean support across a number of different arenas, at both the local and state levels. But perhaps more importantly for CBOs, the support on policy issues from key local elected officials can translate into financial support.

CASA de Maryland, the largest Latino CBO in Montgomery County and one of the primary movers behind the establishment of institutionalized day labor sites in the county, is a prominent example of how local political backing has translated into budgetary support. Some of CASA's primary backers include the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Development, the Montgomery County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Prince George's County CDBG, Prince George's Special Appropriations Funds, Takoma Park CDBG, and the city of Takoma Park. This publicly funded support has been increasing over time: For the fiscal year 2003–2004, CASA's support and revenue via government contracts totaled \$1,124,710, a 33% increase from the \$848,622 CASA received in 2002–2003 (CASA annual report)—this in a period of relatively financial austerity for the county. As Figure 2 indicates, in 2003–2004, nearly 50% of CASA's funding came from government contracts.

CASA is one of the most successful CBOs in Montgomery County, and the amount of funding it receives from the county and state governments may be unusual, but the *share* of public funding it receives, as a percentage of its





**Figure 2.** CASA de Maryland support and revenue 2003–2004

Source: CASA de Maryland 2003–2004 annual report.

total budget, is less unusual: Nonprofits, particularly ethnically based nonprofit organizations, either receive public funding or are simply very small.

Similarly, in Fairfax County, Verdia Haywood, the area's deputy county executive for human services, described how county funds are used to support local nonprofits, in particular funds from the counties' CDBGs received from the federal government. He noted that these block grants are prized for their flexibility, given that each locality can set its own priorities for spending and support. In addition, he indicated that in Fairfax County

we actually created on our own, in Fairfax County, what we call a community funding pool, which really, truly, is a community investment

pool. . . . We allocate roughly \$10 million annually to community-based organizations, and allow those community-based organizations to leverage other funding streams, including federal funding streams and grants and foundations to contribute to the community. And a significant portion of the community funding pool is now going to ethnic minority groups. . . . They are . . . newly emerging organizations, they have excellent vision in terms of energy, drive and commitment; a lot of them leverage the help out of communities around them.

In Fairfax and Montgomery Counties, local ethnically based CBOs are receiving a greater share of funding from local agencies. That they are doing so indicates that governmental actors in these counties are recognizing new issues arising from the demographic changes taking place, are receiving new demands from residents and nonprofit organizations, and are responding by allocating resources. These public resources make up a significant fraction of the budgets of CBOs in the area and provide a significant incentive for these organizations to both seek and maintain good relationships with local governmental actors.

### *Interdependency Increases Legitimacy and Lowers Transaction Costs*

While CBOs seek a relationship with elected officials who control public funding, local governments are actively seeking out partnerships with nonprofits as well. The comments of Verdía Haywood, Fairfax County's deputy county executive for human services, illustrate this nicely, as he discussed the changing relationship of local government to CBOs in Fairfax county:

One of the dramatic changes that have taken place . . . [is] a shifting of responsibility . . . to the local level. [The county] didn't have a major human services function that was institutionalized in government . . . because our social services [were funded by] the state . . . but . . . in the early part of the '80s, [responsibility for human services] was shifted from the state government to the local government. And not only was the shift policy-wise, the shift was resource-wise, and the shift was also service design-wise. In other words, we started trying to figure out what was the best mix and combination of services that we needed in our community. . . . And as a result, we greatly enhanced . . . the levels of service, and the one thing that we did very strategically was beginning to look more at community-based organizations as a

part of the solution . . . to the issues. . . . We leveraged some federal funds there. We leveraged some state funds; we put in some local dollars, there. We've obviously lost almost all of the federal dollars in the antipoverty area [but] they've been . . . enhanced three times over by the locality.

What Haywood described is the process of devolution of responsibilities from the states (Virginia in his case) to localities (Fairfax County), with the counties taking over, in the 1980s, many of the social service provision that had previously been funded and administered through the state or federal government. Through this process, localities lost funding streams they had relied on but also gained greater control over service provision, arguably targeting their aid more precisely. The reduced funding and greater flexibility in program design led them to work with CBOs in the nonprofit sector rather than simply setting up programs of their own. However, these partnerships between the public and nonprofit sectors are not simply a factor of leveraging reduced funding.

By building alliances with CBOs, public agencies lower the transaction costs associated with overcoming language and cultural barriers between newcomers and existing residents. Local governmental agencies seek out partnerships with CBOs because these nonprofit groups have expertise that governmental agencies simply do not have. Janet Hubbell, Fairfax County's regional manager for community affairs, explains how bureaucratic agencies are grappling with the issues new immigrant residents have raised in the county:

You have to . . . go back to our three core areas, access to services, service provision, and community capacity building, and we do that by influence. . . . It's not like I can advocate on behalf of immigrant [or] refugee populations, but I can maybe be influenced in some way by having access to those populations and bringing them in. I think, just in the five years that I have been here, everybody's struggling with it. There isn't one county agency that isn't trying to figure out how to be a better public servant when we are dealing with a population that doesn't speak our language.

What is clear from Hubbell's comments is that local governments are behind the curve in responding to the demographic changes that have taken place and are, as she puts it, struggling with how to service the new immigrant and ethnic populations in suburbia.

However, instead of having to build up the necessary expertise on their own and developing the trust with local immigrant and ethnic communities needed to make relationships with these communities work, local governmental agencies can turn to nonprofit actors to serve as a bridge to these ethnic communities. Haywood further discusses how CBOs help county agencies to reach out to immigrant newcomers:

We have obviously had to reorient our services. . . . And that is a great challenge. And we've had to obviously change . . . in order to be able to increase access to the various programs and [to counter immigrants'] suspicion of government and the role that plays. I mean, trying to gain confidence . . . and trust. You know, . . . that population, . . . particularly the Hispanic population, you know, where you got all of the issues of . . . immigration and the issues associated with that, and can I trust [government]. . . . In a lot of areas they came from, you know, they came here because of they couldn't trust their government. Now you all of sudden [you're] going to access the services that you need from government. Who knows, they may report you and you may get deported. All of those issues . . . are dramatically taking place as we have to rethink . . . how we deliver [services], and we found, quite frankly, that a significant vehicle . . . is to partner with community-based organizations that are part of those cultures. . . . I think we are just now beginning to touch the surface of the need, quite frankly, to do that, and that's what I mean by when I say the basic structure of services have had to change as a result.

Haywood's comments underline the point that as ethnic nonprofits seek out relationships with governmental actors for the resources the public sector has to offer, local governmental actors are actively seeking out these relationships as well as a way to gain access to expertise and access to networks the public sector simply does not have.

For starters, community-based groups often have an intimate relationship with newcomers. Tim Freilich, an attorney at the Virginia Justice Center, discusses, for instance, how his organization fills a critical gap in the services provided by Fairfax County:

As long as you're filling a need that the county is looking for—I mean, that's one of the other things that we've been able to offer from the beginning. Even though we don't limit our services to Latinos, all of our staff is bilingual English–Spanish, and so . . . we've been able to say,

“Hey, we have bilingual staff.” You know, there’s a tremendous need in northern Virginia for Spanish-speaking attorneys. And human services workers, for that matter. And so that’s been a good selling point . . . you know, we were able to use our experience representing migrant farm workers to say, “Hey! This is an area of expertise that we can very readily just shift over to day laborers.” You know: a lot of the same issues, as far as language access . . . lack of familiarity with workers’ rights. . . . Plus, we have . . . statewide contacts with folks who work with Latino population throughout the state, that we were able to sort of tie into the efforts and ongoing organizing efforts in northern Virginia.

For the most part, county agencies have been slow to find bilingual staff to serve as intermediaries between these bureaucracies and the influx of new immigrant residents to the county. What CBOs like the Virginia Justice Center offer local governments is access to a readily available pool of experienced staff with specialized language skills, strong ties to the immigrant community, and a broader range of contacts with similar actors throughout the state.

Nonprofit CBOs can offer expertise that lowers the transaction costs governmental agencies face in dealing with new issues raised by the presence of immigrants. And by entering into partnerships with CBOs, public agencies gain access to “trust networks” that facilitate their interactions with these newcomers to the metropolitan area.

### *Interdependency Leverages Public Resources*

From the perspective of local government, the funds they allocate to local nonprofit agencies is money well spent. There is a practical side to their funding of local community-based groups: The funds they allocate make it easier for local governments to address the needs and demands of a new population through the services they offer. There is also a political payoff, certainly: State and federal funds, channeled through localities to particular community-based interests, whether ethnic or otherwise, are a form of selective incentives that local political actors can provide in return for an assumption of political support. In this respect, public funds channeled to local nonprofits are not far removed from the machine politics of the past, which also served to incorporate ethnic newcomers. However, unlike political machines at their height (or perhaps more like them than is commonly realized; Erie argues that even mature political machines did not have the resources to reward all their adherents and supporters; Erie 1988), contemporary suburban governments are usually operating under strict fiscal constraints. Whether offering services

or rewarding potential supporters, the selective incentives local governments can offer are, in fact, quite selective.

While local governments are aware of the issues raised by the changing demographics, it is not clear that they have the funds or the political will to raise additional funds to actually address these issues fully. So what local governmental actors can seek to do is to leverage their funds, to multiply their effect, through their partnerships with nongovernmental actors. Take the case, again, of CASA de Maryland. Robert Hubbard, director of permitting services for Montgomery County, describes his agency's role in facilitating the establishment of CASA's first day labor site:

Initially . . . the problem was identified as a community problem, a loitering disruption . . . people out here soliciting for jobs or whatever. And like I said, CASA stepped up, so there wasn't real police enforcement or zoning enforcement needed. So they said "Well we'll organize, but we need space to do this." And the [Latino] community was helpful in terms of initially finding the site. . . . CASA found a trailer that [the day laborers] could operate out of, so we had to permit the trailer, we had to inspect the trailer. CASA, like I said, does not have a lot of money. They're a nonprofit organization so, there are regulatory requirements and the permitting process, like the requirement for architectural seal and signature on plans that we had to look at and decide whether it was necessary and all. We had the expertise in house that we could waive some of those requirements so we were involved in that.

And then once this became a popular [day labor] site, it again became a nuisance to surrounding businesses, and CASA was asked to move and so we were constantly looking for areas that complied with the zoning requirement or didn't. And it ended up that they're on government property right now, they're on property that's owned by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. So they're basically exempt from the zoning requirement as [it's] a public use. . . . It's just fortunate that CASA was able to find this site [and] get Parks and Planning to agree to [let them] use it. And now, you know, they've satisfied their zoning requirements but we're still working with them on some of the building code issues and making the space work for them on a daily basis.

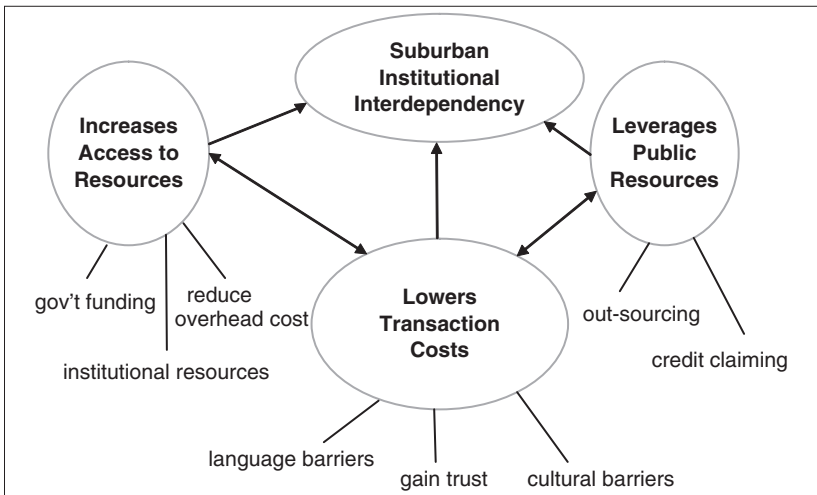
Hubbard describes a process by which both bureaucrats and community-based groups identify a common problem—in this case, the issue of formal day labor sites—and then act on it together. The specific implementation of

policy is left up to the CBOs. In this case, once the issue is identified, CASA is left to find a solution: a site in which to situate an institutionalized day labor site. Once a site is found, there is a bureaucratic process that has to be surmounted. A less helpful local governmental agency could, at this stage, stymie the CBOs initiative. Instead, in Montgomery County, public agencies facilitated CASA's passage through the permitting process to meet the county's regulatory requirements. Then, once the initial site is successful—too successful, in fact, for it to remain where it was—public agencies, in this case the Parks and Planning Department, once again cooperated to smooth the process, helping to acquire public land for the day labor site that was exempt from the zoning process. But at every step, it was the CBO that took the initiative for implementing the policy and public agencies responded.

Two aspects of the relationship between public agencies and CBOs are highlighted by the CASA de Maryland case. The first is that even when local governments and nonprofit agencies agree on the issues at stake and the possible solutions, it may be up to the nonprofit to actually work out a solution. Second, the kinds of resources that government agencies allocate in support of CBO work are often nonmaterial: They are aid in kind or expertise rather than money. It may be that leaving much of the resolution of problem to CBOs allows local governmental actors to gain credibility with a particular constituency while simultaneously distancing themselves from any possible political fallout. On the other hand, if things go well, local governmental actors' ties to CBOs allow them to "credit claim" any success (see Mayhew 1974).

Best of all, local governments can do all of this relatively cheaply. From housing to education and from zoning to law enforcement, bureaucratic service and regulatory local governmental agencies are often the "first responders" of suburban municipal government for immigrants and other suburban newcomers. Such agencies are responsible for providing local public goods and implementing programs and services that directly affect the day-to-day lives of suburban newcomers, particularly among the most vulnerable populations such as day laborers. However, despite their role on the front lines of service provision, local agencies are constrained by their financial resources. Bureaucratic agencies may *wish* to intervene in addressing social needs but are likely to have little or no additional funds available to address the needs of suburban newcomers.

Alliances between public and nonprofit groups allow local bureaucrats to minimize outlays of their scarce resources in dealing with the issues associated with the demographic shifts taking place in suburbia. The primary cost outlays for any agency initiating programs are often those associated with personnel. So if in responding to an issue that demanded an allocation of resources local



**Figure 3.** Interdependent relationships among institutional actors in suburbia

governments were to seek to keep costs down, they would do so by minimizing staffing. Local governmental agencies can do so successfully by building partnerships with local nonprofit groups. What occurs in these partnerships is that governmental agencies essentially outsource their response to issues such as day labor to nonprofit groups, thereby keeping down their personnel costs. In return for programmatic funding, access to public facilities, and agency support, nonprofits essentially absorb the costs of hiring specialized personnel: staff with particular specialties (immigration law), particular skills (the ability to offer bilingual support), and/or access to particular networks (undocumented immigrants) that are built on long-term relationships built on trust.

What we see in the D.C. metropolitan area is that local governments are responding (albeit slowly) to the needs and demands of immigrant and ethnic arrivals to the suburbs but that they outsource much of the effort to nonprofit agencies while still taking credit for the programs these CBOs initiate, maintain, and staff.

### **The Stability and Limitations of Institutional Interdependency in Suburbia**

We set out to analyze how local political actors seek to address issues such as day labor in suburbia despite the difficulties of collective action, particularly



around policies requiring some redistribution of public resources. That the research findings indicate that local actors often address these redistributive issues through institutional coalitions formed among elected officials, bureaucratic agencies, and CBOs suggests that some tenets of public choice and urban regime theories are in need of revision. The logic of institutional interdependency outlined in the research overcomes the obstacles to collective action and allows local actors to leverage a combination of public and private resources to address the needs of immigrants, both documented and undocumented, in suburbia, even though these newcomers can bring relatively little pressure to bear on local political actors through electoral politics.

It might seem puzzling, given the difficulties of maintaining coalitions or partnerships in other social and political arenas, that the relationships between local governmental agencies and CBOs should even occur or that they can prove stable. Yet as we have indicated, there is a powerful logic at work behind these relationships that lends them this stability: Each set of actors benefits from the relationship. The most obvious aspect of the relationship is the funding and support nonprofits receive from local governments. But the relationship is far from one-sided, and local governments profit as well from this symbiosis. Governmental actors gain legitimacy and lower transaction costs as localities attempt to grapple with new issues and problems, like those brought about by the changing demographics of suburbia. In addition, by leveraging their resources through the partnerships they build with nonprofits, governmental agencies can outsource much of the work, keeping their costs low while insulating themselves from risk and allowing them to share in any success.

The relationship between these actors may prove a win-win solution for all involved. Presumably, once in place, these partnerships should have broader effects: The social capital built through interdependent relationships in suburbia can be stored to later produce minority elected officials, to push for diverse representation on community boards, to generate get-out-the-vote drives, or to help mobilize immigrant and historically disenfranchised or disenfranchised groups in other ways.

This analysis raises several important empirical and normative questions concerning suburban democratic governance and accountability for future study. On one hand, institutional interdependency can yield a division of labor and resources that facilitates the process of “getting things done” in the face of tightening budgets. Through information dissemination, building constituency trust, and facilitating norms of reciprocity, institutional interdependency can also soothe the wounds of redistribution—cloaked in the language of egalitarian principals to some and protecting private property for

others. Such alliances may function as an oversight and monitoring mechanism for feedback and accountability by bringing once-excluded actors to the decision-making table.

On the other hand, despite the potential gains to CBOs through forming interdependent relationships, such alliances with local governmental and public-sector actors can affect the influence of nonprofit advocacy groups, thwarting the potential for political insurgency at the grassroots level. Traditionally in urban areas, political insurgency is often necessary to change the status quo, particularly related to civil and human rights (Piven and Cloward 1976). If, as facilitated through community-based groups, immigrant newcomers are provided the human services and resources they need to “get started” in suburbia—and regulatory agencies adopt policies that seemingly appease these groups—why would constituents bother rallying in the state capital, sustaining attendance at the PTA or neighborhood association meetings, applying for citizenship, registering to vote, or casting a ballot on election day? In other words, to what extent do CBOs risk being silenced by forming interdependent relationships?

Second, controversial issues can often become a nondecision or nonissue (Bachrach and Baratz 1962), as bureaucrats and other local officials decide to take such concerns off the collective decision-making table. The nonissue in suburbia is as important as those issues that make their way to the fore. Elected officials can select which constituency issues or CBOs to support while shutting others out. Factions favoring the “nondecision” or “nonissue” can hinder efforts to address controversial issues, particularly where weak or ambivalent leadership is present—as witnessed in Fairfax County’s slow efforts to address day laborer concerns and in the eventual stalling of these efforts in Herndon, Virginia, by 2007 in the face of entrenched opposition by elected officials responding to (and encouraging) anti-immigrant sentiment (Alonso 2007; Dwyer 2005; Turgue and Brulliard 2006; Turgue 2006; Osterling and McClure 2008; Price and Singer 2008; Singer, Wilson, and DeRenzi 2009; Hobbins 2006). The events of Herndon warrant further elaboration.

On August 17, 2005, the city of Herndon approved a publicly funded institutionalized day labor hiring center. The local government, in collaboration with local churches, particularly Reston Interfaith, and community-based leaders including those active in the HEART organization (Herndon Embraces All With Respect and Tolerance) organized Project Hope and Harmony to facilitate the setup of the center inside a former police station. Reston Interfaith lobbied for and secured a grant from Fairfax County for the center’s operating costs. However, in September 2005, the conservative political watchdog group Judicial Watch filed a lawsuit against the town of Herndon

and Fairfax County for using taxpayer funds to establish a day laborer center. Less than one year following the opening of the center, Herndon voters rejected local officials who had supported it at the polls, including the city mayor Michael O'Reilly and several council members. Herndon voters elected a new mayor who had been on the record opposing the center's establishment.

Following the persistent local and national public outcry surrounding the day labor center in Herndon, coupled with strong opposition from anti-immigrant groups such as Help Save Herndon and the local chapter of the Herndon Minutemen, as well as lobbying from the Republican candidate for governor in 2006, the day labor center was subsequently closed in September 2007 after operating for only 21 months (Alonso 2007; Dwyer 2005; Turgue and Brulliard 2006; Turgue 2006; Osterling and McClure 2008; Price and Singer 2008; Singer, Wilson, and DeRenzis 2009; Hobbins 2006). Osterling and McClure (2008, 17) aptly describe the influence of anti-illegal immigration groups such as the Minutemen in the local debate:

Rather than staging mass marches, the Minutemen chose to target day laborer sites, along with social service funding and housing occupancy regulations in very small areas within the D.C. area. By deploying their members and using national funding, the minutemen were able to change the composition of the city council in Herndon, Virginia, where the day laborer site controversy became the focus of national attention.

It is clear from the Herndon, Virginia, example that while the institutional interdependency of governmental and nongovernmental sectors is important to getting a project off the ground, the stability of these relationships varies greatly both across and within political jurisdictions.

While we set out to analyze *how* some local actors work interdependently in demographically and economically dynamic suburban environments, this analysis does not address *why* some suburban municipalities advance policies and programs to provide goods and services that foster the social, political, and economic incorporation of some groups while other counties fail to do so. For example, why did Montgomery County and Prince Georges County officials more readily work with CBOs such as Case de Maryland while Fairfax County officials proved much slower to form alliances and to publicly act on the burgeoning day laborer issue, and when these alliances did come into place, why were they more easily disrupted in the face of opposition? What mechanisms drove some suburban governments to work collectively to develop programs and policies that are seemingly counter to

their own economic development interests, or the interests of upper income populations in the suburban county, while others take more confrontational approaches to undocumented immigration in their jurisdictions? These differences across localities are worth further exploration.

Unlike the earlier era of great immigration to urban centers, where political machines were built on the votes of immigrant groups in exchange for patronage jobs and other benefits, which helped some immigrants move up the ladder of social mobility, the direct beneficiaries of programs and policies like those directed at day laborers are often nonvoters and noncitizens. Apart from suggesting that public choice and regime theories may have too constrained a view of the capacity of local political actors to initiate redistributive policies, even outside the pressures of electoral politics, this research also suggests a view of immigrant incorporation through nonelectoral pathways rather than simply through voting (Jones-Correa 2005; Marrow 2009). This too is worth exploring.

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### **Notes**

1. The authors conducted these interviews, together with Junsik Youn.
2. These interview data were analyzed using the qualitative software program ATLAS-TI (<http://www.atlasti.de/intro.shtml>).
3. National Day Labor Organizing Network official Web page, [http://www.ndlon.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=60&Itemid=1](http://www.ndlon.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=60&Itemid=1)
4. Notably, the interviews in this study, collected from June 2003 to August 2004, preceded the immigrant rights marches of 2006, where thousands of immigrants (both documented and undocumented) from Los Angeles to Atlanta came “out of the shadows” to voice their grievances concerning several national comprehensive immigration reform bills proposed by the 109th and 110th U.S. Congresses. These interviews also preceded many of the later developments related to the day labor center in Herndon, Virginia, as discussed in detail in the article.
5. The survey found that day laborers in the county tended to be Hispanic men, between 18 and 35 years of age. Moreover, the survey found that “over 80 percent

of respondents are from Central or South America and the remaining 4.2 percent of respondents were from Mexico” (Department of Systems Management for Human Services [DSMHS] 2004, 3). The survey also found that

the majority of respondents (over 90 percent of respondents who provided zip code information) reside in Fairfax County. . . . The majority of respondents live within walking distance of the site where they were interviewed . . . [and] most respondents live within a few miles of the day laborer site where they were interviewed. Of all of the respondents, two-thirds walk to the site. The average distance to the site for those that walk is less than one mile. For those respondents that drive or use public transportation to go to the site, the average distance is 4.9 miles. On average, respondents reside 2.4 miles from the day laborer site where they work. (DSMHS 2004, 3)

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## Bios

**Lorrie A. Frasure** is an assistant professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles in Los Angeles, CA.

**Michael Jones-Correa** is professor of government at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY.