

# **The Metropolitan Structures of Political Culture and Electoral Politics: The MetroAmerica Votes and Metropolitan Cultural Survey Project**

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## **Objectives:**

This project will create a multidimensional database that will enable scholars to explore the political and cultural perspectives and preferences of metropolitan residents, along with the choices of voters in local and national elections. Scholars will be able to identify relationships between the proliferating numbers of increasingly distinct places that comprise America's metropolitan regions, the political attitudes and actions of the residents of these places, and significant national electoral and political cultural trends. Researchers will engage the "place matters" debate, as they seek to determine whether and how the dynamic diversity of places that comprise the nation's urban regions reflects, organizes, or even determines political perspectives, preferences, and electoral choices.

This work is significant to the larger discourses of American political society, as it speaks to the structure and function of the national polity in deep and fundamental ways. Nearly two-thirds of all Americans now live within the nation's 100 largest urban regions. Together, these metropolitan areas are responsible for the overwhelming majority of the nation's Gross Domestic Product. (Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institute.) As the nation's economy and society have continued to urbanize, and as the structure and character of America's metropolitan areas have changed, the need to investigate and understand relationships between metropolitan space and the political perspectives and behaviors of urban residents has increased. Yet, research in the areas of urban politics and policy has suffered significantly from the absence of the types of electoral, behavioral, and attitudinal data sets that are available to students of national culture, ideology, and voting behavior.

Currently there are *no* comprehensive and comparative datasets of returns for local and national elections that are tallied at the local level and there are *no* major surveys of

politically and culturally oriented attitudes and behaviors of the nation's metropolitan residents that are coded at the local level. As a consequence, scholars are presently incapable of making more than rudimentary claims about critical relationships between the structures of metropolitan space, the political and cultural attitudes and actions of urban residents, and the patterns of metropolitan electoral returns that drive local and national policy processes.

To address this void, we propose to construct a database of locally aggregated local and national election returns from 12 major metropolitan areas for all significant elections from 1960 to 2008. This component of our research will be called the MetroAmerica Votes Project. We will also conduct a citizen survey on culturally and politically oriented attitudes and behaviors in the same urban regions. This component of the research will be called the Urban Cultural Survey. When data for both studies are interconnected, scholars will have a nationally significant dataset comprised of time-tracked locally tallied national and local election returns (reflecting *political behavior*) along with locally coded, or "geocoded," attitudinal and behavioral survey research (reflecting *political ideologies and attitudes*) allowing theoretical and empirical connections to be made between the ways in which citizens think and act politically within metropolitan local and regional contexts.

Metropolitan regions, with the range of places and diversity of residents that comprise them, represent the divergent and competing interests, values, and perspectives that make up America's larger political society and culture. And so, in a sense, metropolitan America represents a political and cultural microcosm of the nation as a whole. More critically, insofar as the diverse and competing cultural perspectives and preferences that define the national polity are shaped by variations within the social, political, historical, and economic landscapes of the nation's urban regions, metropolitan America may indeed *structure* as well as *reflect* the content and course of national political culture.

The creation of a large and locally coded metropolitan electoral and attitudinal database will allow scholars across disciplines to engage in theory-building, research, and analysis that speaks to central debates about both the ideological state of the country as well as potentially critical connections between political culture, electoral behavior, and public policy-making at local, and potentially national, levels. The depth and richness of the cross-coded information contained within the final dataset will represent an invaluable resource of lasting significance for urban scholars working from many disciplines; political science, sociology, anthropology, geography, and history.

#### Significance and Relation to Present State of Knowledge in the Field:

A century ago, America's central cities expanded their boundaries frequently to include most, if not all, of the lands that developed along their respective frontiers. As a consequence, the nation's central cities and metropolitan regions were largely one and the same. Since that time however, many central cities have seen their ability to annex adjacent developments severely curtailed or eliminated. As a consequence, many urban

regions are now characterized by central cities that appear increasingly small in comparison to the vast and growing tracts of suburban development that spread beyond their limits. In the majority of cases, these lands have been incorporated into growing numbers of individual localities, each with independent powers of taxation, law enforcement, and land use control.

It is important to note, however, that suburbanization, and the proliferation of suburban localities that has so often resulted, is only one of the processes transforming so many of the nation's urban regions. As America's metropolitan localities have increased in number, their material, social, economic, and demographic characteristics have diverged significantly, as a consequence of a variety of public policies and corporate decisions that sort people, opportunities, and activities across urban space, reflecting innumerable individual choices made within the nation's markets of metropolitan space. Such choices distribute people, opportunities, resources, and activities in ways that are politically relevant (Weiher, 1991, Sauerzopf and Swanstrom, 1999; Reese and Cox, 2007). People and places are related to each other in critical ways. As inter-municipal differentiation intensifies, the potential for metropolitan localities to structure or affect, as well as to reflect, the political perspectives, interests, preferences, and actions of their residents grows. Examining critical relationships in the changing patterns of American metropolitan space, political culture, and voting, is becoming increasingly urgent.

The quest for a theoretical framework for understanding local politics, political behavior, and policy-making has been a recurring focus of research on local governments. Yet sub-national political and policy-making frameworks have never been fully integrated into national level models. A recent colloquy in *Urban Affairs Review* provided a discussion of the state of the urban politics field. The main conclusions were that urban politics needed comparative theories that focused on variation in local cultures and behaviors; significant improvements in methods and data will be required to develop such theories. One author further noted that urban political and social research had been marginalized because "urban scholars were pursuing theoretical developments unlike those found in American politics" (Judd, 2005:123).

However, urban research could be substantially reinvigorated if scholars were able to link theory and data more strongly, and to embrace an expanded comparative approach (Jones, 1989; Denters and Mossberger, 2006; Sharp, 2007). Comparative urban research is important, both practically and scientifically, because metropolitan areas and their constituent localities represent "centers of inventiveness and innovation." Their number and variety allow testing of causal relationships explaining political, economic, and social behavior and change (Hall, 1998; Pierre, 2005; Denters and Mossberger, 2006).

A robust national/metropolitan dataset focusing on the local origins of political culture *and* electoral behavior would provide the basis to address a number of questions critical to the development of urban political theory, tying together urban and national theories and models:

- Can the post-war history of American election politics be understood within the frameworks of suburbanization and the attendant re-structuring and segregation of American metropolitan space? To what extent are residential migration patterns responsible for aggregate political and cultural changes?
- Are metropolitan areas the best places for national politicians and policymakers to begin to look for sources for comprehension and support in the national political and policymaking processes? How does local culture affect local and national electoral behaviors?
- How do municipalities systematically differ in the political attitudes and attendant voting behavior of their citizens? Are cities and their suburbs growing further apart or closer together in culture, political ideology, partisanship, social issue positions, and electoral behaviors?
- How are culture and policy related at the local level? Can typologies of culture be consistently linked to particular public policies?
- Are civic tolerance attitudes principally functions of individual factors such as race, income and occupation? Are they also functions of environmental conditions, such as residence in an integrated community? Do civic and political cultural identities operate the same way for members of different racial and ethnic groups? How important is tolerance to the sustainability of municipalities?
- How are the perspectives and preferences of individuals related to their places of residence or work? Are individual attitudes mitigated or enhanced in particular urban locations and contexts?
- Do particular types of local culture relate to presumably beneficial outcomes such as enhanced levels of tolerance, economic growth, and civic participation? Specifically, do particular configurations of political attitudes and ideologies enhance voting and other forms of civic participation?
- What are the relationships between metropolitan and national electoral structures? Are national election politics meaningfully structured by metropolitan electoral patterns?

#### Relationship to Work Elsewhere:

The manner in which metropolitan places and their importance to political society are understood is critical. Evidence indicates that the political preferences of spatially located groups of urban residents are increasingly marked by divergence. While scholars have been concerned with a growing polarization of the political positions of city and suburban residents for some time, more recent work indicates that metropolitan patterns of political preference are more complex than any simple city-suburban dichotomy (Greenstein and Wolfinger, 1958; Schneider, 1991). Forces other than national political affiliations are likely to shape local elections, suggesting greater salience of group identities such as race, class, religion, and sexual orientation, all of which may include spatial components (Kaufmann, 2004). Whether residents' characteristics and inclinations aggregate to give local places their political character, or, more critically, whether places transform their residents in politically meaningful ways, or some combination of both, a better understanding of place will influence our

interpretation of political actions, as it will impact local, regional, and national policy discourses.

Whether national cultures simply transfer or spill over to urban areas (Skocpol et al., 2000; Lamont, 2000) or whether “political culture may not be part of a national infrastructure but rather local practices replicated throughout a country” (Sellers, 2005: 429) has not been determined. Research to date on the variables that shape voting in local—and by extension—national elections has provided insights into the connections between place and political preferences, yet has also left some significant theoretical gaps. Nardulli et al. found interesting differences in voting behavior associated with place (1996). Building on an early study by Eldersveld (1949), Sauerzopf and Swanstrom tracked twelve of the nation’s largest cities from 1920 to 1996 in a study of the connections between changes in urban space and electoral behavior (1999). The most critical early study exploring the effects of suburbanization on political attitudes is probably Greenstein and Wolfinger’s 1958 work suggesting a politically transformative effect of suburban residence. Edsall and Edsall (1992) weave together rich historical narratives to suggest that fundamental changes within metropolitan America following the end of the New Deal era resulted in locally and nationally relevant political attitudinal shifts. Work by Huckfeldt et al. spanning decades has shown the importance of relationships between local social contexts and residential political preferences, as well as other factors ranging from friendship networks to church affiliation, to political disagreement (Huckfeldt, 1979; 1983; Huckfeldt et al., 1993; Huckfeldt et al., 2002). Interactions between race and neighborhood social organization also appear to impact such political psychological issues as trust, alienation, and suspicion of out-groups (Oliver and Mendelberg, 2000). In short, the political preferences and behaviors of metropolitan residents “can be seen as the product of interdependent citizens making choices and decisions within a range of contexts over which they have only partial control” (Huckfeldt, et al., 1993: 366). These contexts include the location of residence of individuals in relation to surrounding populations and the traits and preferences of those populations, or “the behaviors of others within an individual’s life space” (ibid: 368).

Local context matters apart from individual traits (Putnam, 1966; Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1991) although there appear to be significant interactive effects between neighborhood context and race (Marschall and Stolle, 2004). Although much of this work was based on neighborhood environment it points to the importance of examining municipal and larger metropolitan environments as similar shapers of political attitudes and behaviors. And, research failing to find a social-context effect of culture at the state level suggests that a more limited geography, perhaps between the neighborhood and the state, is appropriate (Erikson et al., 1987).

The studies noted above do not address the ways in which local cultures can contribute to our understanding of national politics; they also beg the issue of connections between culture and local electoral behaviors (Sharpe, 2007). Extant analyses of local voting behavior have been limited to larger cities (Pelissero et al.; Kaufmann, 2004) and have tended to focus on issues such as race and ethnicity, campaign contributions, or sexual preference (Browning et al., 1989; Sonenshein, 1993; DeLeon, 1992; Krebs and Pelissero,

2001). The limited research to date, which suggests interactions between local cultural forces and citizen traits (race, religion) and behavior -political orientation (liberalism/ conservatism), and political participation - clearly suggests that a more explicit focus on local culture, local elections, and connections between local and national political behaviors and trends is critical to the further development of urban political theory (Naff and DeLeon, 2004; Sharpe, 2007).

The effort to provide scholars and others with a record of local returns for elections in the United States is not entirely unprecedented. Unfortunately, each of the datasets that have resulted is seriously flawed in one or more respects. The Record of American Democracy (ROAD) study included nationally comprehensive sets of local returns for all elections for national and state offices. Unfortunately, the study only covered elections from 1984-1990; scholars cannot use ROAD data itself to support longer-term analysis. Even more problematically, all ROAD data are aggregated for local election districts, and not for localities per se. Because election districts are special to the purposes of individual county elections offices, their boundaries have a tendency to change significantly over time, and they are not always drawn to be coterminous with the borders of localities. Therefore, regardless of the timeframe in question, election district data cannot be used consistently to test relationships between localities as places per se and the aggregate electoral behavior of their residents. Furthermore, returns from election districts cannot easily and accurately be linked to contextual information from any other sources, such as the Bureau of the Census.

Finally, due to the transitory nature of election district boundaries, and because accurate historical records of their parameters are often either not kept or are otherwise difficult to access, it can be difficult or even impossible for scholars to associate any geographically located information whatsoever, such as survey responses or Census data, precisely with specific election districts through time. This is especially the case if the data in question, like Census data, are historical or longitudinal in nature. And yet, despite so many limitations, the ROAD project remains the best source, so far, of locally aggregated election returns available to scholars and others interested in investigating relationships between local space and electoral behavior.

The America Votes series, which is presently published by Congressional Quarterly, is the most comprehensive source of national historical election data ever to be produced, and so it is another potential resource for urban scholars. Unfortunately, most of the returns published in this series are aggregated at the state and county level. Beyond returns from a few of the largest cities, America Votes contains no returns tallied for localities. National and state elections offices offer no improvements on America Votes as sources for national election returns. The Federal Election Commission only reports returns for national candidates aggregated at the national and state levels. Few states, if any, report election returns tallied at the local level. The nation's counties continue to be the best sources for locally tallied election returns. Indeed, they are usually the only places where such information can be found. In recent years, many counties have begun posting returns on the Internet. And so, access to locally tallied election returns has indeed increased. Unfortunately, the practice is not universal, and few counties post much in the way of historical information. Locally aggregated metropolitan

election returns, going at least as far back as 1960, are critical to exploring relationships between local and national electoral politics and major metropolitan regions, as they have evolved through the post-war period substantially beyond the increasingly sclerotic boundaries of their central cities to become the sprawling and fragmented metropolitan regions in which most Americans now live.

Interest in relationships between the local dimensions of political culture and behavior has increased in recent years, lending renewed vigor and rigor to the study of urban politics (see Sharp, 1999; DeLeon and Naff, 2003; Sharp, 2004; Reese and Rosenfeld, 2008, for example). Unfortunately, this has not always been the case. While an extensive body of work in political science relates to the role that political culture plays in our understandings of international, national, and state-level institutions, policies, and processes, the significance of local political cultures has been explored to a lesser extent, and it has often been tied to regime approaches (Almond and Verba, 1963; Elazar, 1966; Sharkansky, 1970; Jackman and Miller, 1996, for example).

Almond and Verba's (1963) *The Civic Culture* is a seminal work at the cross-national level. In a study of five societies, these authors sought to link political culture with democratic attributes so that they might identify cultures that promote stable democratic systems. They clearly differentiate between political culture and structure, although they are seen as related entities that can conflict in times of large-scale cultural change (1963). Jackman and Miller (1996) revisit much of the early cross-national culture literature, including Almond and Verba (1963), McClelland (1961/1963), Inglehart (1990), and Putnam (1993). They ultimately conclude that cultural explanations are limited because they do not include consideration of institutions. Indeed, comparative political culture work fell into disfavor for many years because of the lack of attention to institutions, the inability to predict democratic outcomes, unspecified links between culture and structure, and its tendency to make culture a residual category (Laitin, 1995). Yet, cultural explanations including symbols and religious practices (Levine, 1965; Geertz, 1973), that are able to separate culture from party and social class (Elkins, 1993), and that focus on civic community showing the impact of culture even controlling for economic explanations (Putnam, 1993), suggest that even in the comparative national field, new conceptualizations of the cultural framework may "induce a new generation of scholars to revivify the political culture research program" (Laitin, 1995: 173).

There is also a long literature exploring the nature and role of political culture at the state level (Key, 1949; Fenton, 1966; Patterson, 1968). Elazar's work on US cultures (1994) has served as a base for much subsequent sub-national research. Elazar suggests that political culture has a dual "manifestation" based upon individual and community beliefs expressed through political symbols and community and individual political styles. Political culture encompasses perceptions of how government should function, who has access to it, and how and what policy outputs result.

Earlier, Kluckhohn (1954) identified six pivotal themes underlying cultures: language, aesthetic expression, standardized orientation to life problems, means to perpetuate the group, individual demands for order, and individual demands for survival. Based on

this definition, Elazar (1966) described three identifiable political subcultures: individualistic, moralistic, and traditionalistic, and used these types to map the “American cultural matrix:” the distribution of political cultures among states and geographic regions within states. His analysis was based on descriptive interpretations rather than on an empirical analysis of data representing aspects of political culture, however. He may indeed have been mapping variables beyond culture, specifically, race and ethnic variation (Hero and Tolbert, 1996).

Elazar’s original cultural types have been tested several times by researchers examining state political culture (Erikson, et. al., 1993; Koven, 1999). Elazar’s three cultural categories were broadened into a nine-point scale by Sharkansky (1970) and ten sub-categories by Liske (1993). While Putnam (2000) has suggested that the original Elazar typology appears to define state cultures of the late 1980s, Sharp (2004) found little correlation between Elazar’s measures and more current census and survey indicators of culture. That efforts to test for the presence of Elazar’s cultures provided only weak support suggests that refinements are needed to the schema either to account for cultural complexity (beyond narrow race, religion, and ethnicity measures) or change in culture over time (Sharp, 2004).

More recent work on comparative state cultures appears to suggest a burgeoning consensus that state cultures are important in accounting for differences in resulting policies (Wright, et al., 1985; Clingermayer and Wood, 1995; Brace, et. al., 2004) and that state public opinion and culture are tied to economic changes independent of national trends (Brace, 1993). Finally, state culture “dominates” demographics in accounting for differences in political ideology, leading some to conclude that: “geographic location may be a more important source of opinion than previously thought” (Erikson et al., 1987: 797). Since municipalities present even more variety and finer distinctions in demographics, ideology, and culture, they provide a broader laboratory for further examination of the interplay between these forces, and ultimately, public policy.

Banfield and Wilson (1963) recognized the role of political culture in urban politics in their work, which was based on earlier research rooted in essential contextual questions of who has power in communities and whose interests predominate therein. Dahl’s (1961) work on New Haven presented the pluralist “culture” as an alternative to the elitist frameworks of Hunter (1953). Stone’s regime theory (1989), with its emphasis on governing coalitions, implied that each local system varied in response to systemic power interests, opening the door for consideration of different local governing cultures that define the extent to which economic interests are favored, under what circumstances, and to what effect.

Scholars have begun to explore the larger cultural context that has been identified as influencing city politics, including ethnic identities, religion/religiosity, urban liberalism, racial intolerance, and social reforms (Greer, 1981). Research has focused on “progressive” (Clavel, 1986; Ferman, 1996), “unconventional” (Rosdil, 1991; Sharp, 2002), “new” (Clark and Inglehart, 1998; DeLeon and Naff, 2003), and “creative” political cultures (Florida, 2002). Reese and Rosenfeld (2002, 2008) used civic culture to create meaningful typologies of cities linked to different policy approaches to local



economic development. Local cultures appear enduring, able to withstand significant local structural change (Reese and Cox, 2007).

Racial and ethnic identities appear to be particularly potent aspects of local culture, leading some scholars to frame culture in terms of conflict, treating cultural politics as a venue for political struggle as identities, races, and ethnicities “forge communities, reproduce inequalities, and vindicate exclusions” (Moore, et al., 2003: 2). Local political culture appears to interact with individual level political variables such as racial and religious tolerance and political ideology (Davis, 1990; Naff and DeLeon, 2004) to affect levels of political participation, protest activity and involvement in meetings/rallies (Sharp, 2005), highlighting inevitable ties between culture and political behavior. The impact of race on local electoral outcomes and the likelihood of building inter- or cross-racial coalitions appear related to cultural “unconventionalism” (Naff and DeLeon, 2004; Sharp 2005; Florida, 2005). Cultural histories of race relations affect voter mobilization and local electoral politics; depending on the context, citizens can and do vote across racial lines (Simpson, 2004).

There appear to be connections between governmental systems (e.g., political machine histories), political distrust, and attitudes about immigrants and the level of immigrant integration into local political systems (Cano, 2004). Given arguments that immigration, diversity, and tolerance are critical to economic prosperity (Florida, 2002), research on these aspects of local culture is central to debates in political science and political economy. All of these findings suggest that local culture presents a robust framework for urban political theory building. The limited yet growing body of research to date on local culture suggests empirical connections between cultural types and local public policies, implying causal relationships from which a true urban political theory can be developed.

Unfortunately, scholars presently do not possess tools adequate to the task of fully exploring relationships between indicators of cultural perspectives and preferences, any of a variety of individual-level characteristics, and urban space at the local level, while the general lack of locally tallied metropolitan election data impairs the ability of urban scholars to identify and interpret locally oriented electoral patterns and trends; scholars are also frustrated by serious deficiencies in the availability of locally coded and comparable metropolitan survey research.

Although there are several datasets that contain information about the political and cultural attitudes of metropolitan residents, they all suffer from significant limitations, especially for their potential use in comparative analyses. The Roper Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey includes locally coded responses to many questions regarding the politically and culturally oriented perspectives and preferences of residents. Unfortunately, the selection of localities represented in the Survey constitutes a convenience sample of those municipalities willing and able to raise revenues sufficient to conduct the survey. Additionally, questions from this study focus exclusively on elements of ideological as opposed to civic culture. This problem will be discussed further below. Another potential source is The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods. This dataset represents a limitation common

to much previous work on local context and culture and attitudes, (see Huckfeldt, 1993; 2002; Marschall and Stolle, 2004, for example) which is the lack of a potential for the application of comparative analysis, because they use data from only a single or just a few cities. Finally, the National Election Study and Anneberg data, which otherwise might be of interest to urban scholars, are unsuitable for local analysis because responses to these surveys are not coded by place, and cannot be aggregated by localities or urban regions.

Problems such as these limit all of the survey research currently available to urban scholars. Indeed the website of the Urban Politics Section of the American Political Science Association lists 27 potentially relevant sites or datasets ([www.apsanet.org/~urban/](http://www.apsanet.org/~urban/)). But these resources either fail to focus on the municipality as the unit of analysis, represent single communities, and/or focus on a narrow selection of topics: forms of government, municipal codes, racial conflicts, or poverty. Urban scholars do not yet have access to a single source of survey research data that contains locally coded and comparative information on the politically and culturally oriented attitudes and behaviors of metropolitan residents.

Defining what is meant by culture is often difficult and gets to the root of many shortcomings in extant datasets. Political culture has been defined as “the normative context within which politics takes place. This context includes the ideals, beliefs, values, symbols, stories, and public rituals that bind people together and direct them in common action. Political action then emanates from political culture, is a reflection of that culture’s ideals and reinforces its normative boundaries” (IASC, 2007). Culture includes the “beliefs, values and affective commitments that groups of individuals hold in common; these beliefs, values, and effective commitments are expected to provide the basis for individuals to interpret reality and perhaps even to define their own identities” (Crothers and Lockhart, 200: 1).

Past and present local cultural research suggests conceptualizations that focus on two different albeit related aspects or interpretations of culture. One conceptualization of local culture is social or *ideological* in nature, focusing on individual values, beliefs, and ideologies. This conceptualization is evident in the works of Ross (2000), Naff and DeLeon (2004), and Sharp (2005). Local ideological cultures include party preferences, liberal or conservative leanings, life-style choices, political tolerance, religious values, and the like. The other interpretation of local culture rests on a systemic conceptualization of culture (Parsons, 1951; Easton 1965). This definition of culture is not social or ideological, but rather is rooted in governance and thus represents “*civic*” as opposed to “*ideological*” culture, acknowledging that governing and public decision-making are conducted collectively.

Municipalities have collective memories and identities that are not the simple sum of individual preferences and values. Local civic cultures represent systems of individual and group interactions in a public policy-making context that inherently necessitates the “allocation of value” with processes reflecting both individual and community values and goals. Figure 1 indicates the types of variables considered to be part of the local culture—including both ideological and civic aspects—as well and exogenous variables

outside the local culture.<sup>i</sup> Data collected for the Metropolitan Cultural Survey portion of this project will include both ideological and civic components of local culture.

FIGURE 1: LOCAL CULTURE

| Exogenous Factors    | Ideological Culture         | Civic Culture           |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Age                  | Political ideology          | Input opportunities     |
| Natural resources    | Partisanship                | Power systems           |
| Fiscal health        | Religious values/activities | Political participation |
| Geography/region     | Life style preferences      | Policy innovation       |
| Demographics         | Civic tolerance             | Risk tolerance          |
| Size                 | Trust                       | Planning/evaluation     |
| Government structure | Personal responsibility     | Conflict tolerance      |
| Density              | Political Efficacy          | Community volunteerism  |

### Why the Metropolitan Level of Analysis?

In the preceding discussions, we have summarized the state of the literature regarding local electoral and cultural behaviors and attitudes. We believe that scholars have much more work to do in these areas. We believe that further exploration of the relationships between local cultures and electoral preferences is centrally important to our understanding of the social, political, and cultural structures not only of our nation's metropolitan regions, but of our nation itself. This is arguable in part because:

- The United States is a metropolitan nation. In 2007, it was estimated that approximately two-thirds the nation's 300 million residents lived within the nation's 100 largest metropolitan regions (Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institute). Additionally, the overwhelming majority of the nation's gross domestic product now comes from activities located within the nation's urban regions (Katz, et al., 2008). Because most of the nation's people live within these contexts, metropolitan areas are the most logical places to start to look for those relationships between the kinds of culturally grounded perspectives and preferences, and political activities and choices, that can only occur meaningfully within the context of space.
- As the localities that comprise the nation's metropolitan regions increase in number and variety, the economic, racial, demographic, political, and environmental qualities that distinguish them are intensifying. Thus, metropolitan regions, and the varieties of places that they contain, are among the few potential sources of structure for American political cultural perspectives, preferences, and attendant choices that are arguably intensifying in strength and effect.
- Insofar as the diversity of competing cultural perspectives and preferences that define the national polity is shaped by variations within the social, political, historical, and economic landscapes of the nation's major urban regions, metropolitan America may indeed *structure* as well as *reflect* the content and course of national political culture.
- Metropolitan areas, and the cities and suburbs that comprise them, can and do serve as laboratories for testing national theories about political behaviors and culture. They are more numerous than nation-states or states for these purposes and provide

wide variation in cultures, economic conditions, demographics, and political behaviors and attitudes. The municipality is where citizens most directly experience/participate in government; experiences of services and politics at the local level affect national preferences and behaviors.

### The Public Good and Specific Hypotheses:

The project will result in a *common pool research tool* that will be available to all scholars within two years of the project's inception. To demonstrate the types of research questions the database will answer, specific hypotheses that will drive the initial research program of the applicant and other urban scholars are identified below. Many of these (noted in italics) involve data on behaviors and attitudes illustrating the inherent connections between the electoral and cultural portions of the dataset. Dr. Richard Sauerzopf, the Detroit area specialist, will conduct a project focusing on the connections between changes in metropolitan areas and trends in national electoral behavior (e.g. the local roots of national trends). Specific hypotheses include:

$H_1$ : National election trends are more powerfully associated with the restructuring of elections within municipalities in major metropolitan regions than they are with restructuring of preferences by states or regions.

$H_2$ : *Places, defined economically, demographically, physically, and geographically, in relation to other places, are associated with similar patterns of voting in national elections as well as in political attitudes, regardless of the specific metropolitan region in which they are located.*

$H_3$ : *The decomposition of the New Deal coalition and the failure of either national political party to forge a coherent and lasting national electoral and governing majority (1968-present), can be explained most effectively by changes in the political geography of metropolitan areas (social, economic, physical, and institutional). These changes have prevented either major party from forging a lasting majority.*

$H_4$ : Electorates of predominantly white working class suburbs (frequently inner-ring suburbs) have been the principal sources of national electoral instability in the present period due to racial and economic cross-pressures experienced by many residents.

$H_5$ : *America's metropolitan political geography significantly determines national electoral outcomes because metropolitan places critically influence the political attitudes and actions of their residents.*

Hypotheses for a specific research project by Laura Reese, (the project's Primary Investigator) the Tolerance and Economic Development Project, are presented below. This project tests urban economic growth dynamics posed by Florida (2002) suggesting, in short, that diverse and highly talented/educated populations will be drawn to tolerant places leading to greater economic growth. While research to date has explored the correlations between local demographics and economic growth, tolerance has remained unexplored due to the lack of citizen attitudinal data. The following will be tested in the Tolerance and Economic Development project:

H<sub>1</sub>: Municipalities with greater ethnic and racial diversity will have citizens expressing higher levels of tolerance for political and demographic diversity; diverse citizens will be associated with tolerant places.

*H<sub>2</sub>: Greater diversity and tolerant attitudes will be associated with more electoral support for state and local referenda on socially progressive policies related to racial, ethnic, and lifestyle differences.*

H<sub>3</sub>: Municipalities with higher levels of political and social diversity tolerance (acceptance of other races, cultures, lifestyles) will have higher rates of economic growth.

H<sub>4</sub>: Communities with a more religious populous will evidence lower levels of political and social diversity tolerance leading to slower economic growth rates.

H<sub>5</sub>: Increased lifestyle diversity among a city's population will be associated with higher levels of tolerance and greater economic growth.

*H<sub>6</sub>: Municipalities with higher levels of tolerance will be more supportive of public policies enhancing arts, schools, libraries, and recreation.*

*H<sub>7</sub>: Communities with greater support for public policies enhancing the arts, schools, libraries, and education will have higher levels of economic growth.*

*H<sub>8</sub>: Proxy measures of tolerance drawn from the census do not significantly correlate with indicators of tolerance drawn from citizen surveys and electoral behavior.*

Of course, each researcher that uses the datasets will have different research questions and hypotheses. The hypotheses noted above simply represent those of two scholars.

Relationship to Longer Term Goals and Work by the PI and Oversight Team: This project is integral to the active research agenda and goals of the PI as well as the larger research oversight team composed of: Elaine Sharpe, University of Kansas; Richard Feiock, Florida State University, Todd Swanstrom, University of Missouri St. Louis, and Richard DeLeon, San Francisco State University.<sup>ii</sup> More specifically the PI has a record of work on local civic culture in both the US and Canada, including a book, a book currently under contract, and numerous journal articles (listed in the "related work summary"). This work has been based on comparative case studies and national public official surveys, primarily of economic development policy. To further develop a theory of local culture and politics that includes explicit relationships between culture and policies as well as culture and political behavior, a national urban dataset is required to overcome the inherent limitations of case studies, to provide citizen perspectives to complement elite surveys, and to address a wider array of policy areas and political behaviors. Very simply, datasets as proposed by the Urban Culture Survey and MetroAmerica Votes project are necessary for urban scholars working across disciplines to have the data that they need to expand their work from interesting but methodologically fragmented findings. Development of urban political theory rests on availability of such a dataset for cutting edge, theoretical advances.

#### General Plan of Work:

The implementation of the Urban Culture Survey will be contracted to the Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at Michigan State University. The IPPSR will be

responsible for survey construction (in consultation with the research team), sampling, and all activities associated with phone surveys. University personnel proximate to the sample metropolitan regions will collect local and national election data. For each sample metropolitan region, a paid local expert and a research assistant will gather and transcribe the data. The local expert will also assist in identifying appropriate ballot initiatives for coding, and identify any idiosyncratic local considerations to be addressed.

#### Detroit Pilot Data Collection:

The applicant and the staff of the Global Urban Studies Program are fully experienced with issues surrounding electoral data collection and are in an excellent position to train and assist the local experts, since substantial data from the Detroit metropolitan area have already been collected as part of Richard Sauerzopf's ongoing Detroit Area Election Study. Indeed, that study serves as the general model for the MetroAmerica Votes project.

The Detroit area data were originally gathered for all locally tallied national elections held from 1960 to 1996 for all counties and municipalities in the region with populations of at least 10,000 persons in 1990. Subsequently, the data were updated through 2008. The challenges associated with this project so far have come from the fact that elections for candidates to national office in the United States are administered at the local level principally by counties, each of which goes about fulfilling its responsibilities in its own way. This has become less of a problem for more recent elections, since increasing numbers of counties have taken up the practice of posting certified election returns online. In the Detroit region, this has dramatically eased the process of updating the Detroit Election Study dataset through to the 2008 national election.

Unfortunately, none of the region's counties posts much in the line of historical election returns online. And so, in order to access historical data for this project, researchers had to contact elections officials personally. Oakland County, which has become one of the wealthiest suburban counties in the nation, had the most efficiently organized archival records. Project investigators had merely to transcribe data from these forms into spreadsheets. Wayne County, with its seat in the City of Detroit, presented more challenges. Wayne County computerized its processes of recording and tallying election returns by 1960. Consequently, as the County updated its information technology over the years, the format of its electoral records changed periodically and significantly. Now, most of what remains of the more recent of these records are kept in massive computer printouts, and are presented in multiple formats. Once located, relevant pages from these computer printouts were photocopied at the elections office and data from them were transcribed into spreadsheets. Wayne County's electoral records from the earlier seventies and before are in much worse shape. Returns from this era were at first printed out. Later, however, the paper printouts were reduced to microfilm. All of the records remaining from these earlier elections are maintained on aging reels of microfilm, which are stored in individual boxes that are poorly labeled and randomly jumbled together in large cartons, which are kept in closets, in the basement of the county office building. To access these materials, researchers had to

sort through scores of microfilm reels to locate and reproduce relevant pages individually, on decrepit photo-static reproducers.

Macomb County was predominantly rural until the 1950s and 1960s. The county's most recent elections records are maintained on computer printouts, which were photocopied and transcribed later. Unfortunately, records that date from the 1970s and before were entered into large (or "Royal") folio ledgers by hand, and mostly in pencil written script. In some cases, returns for these earlier elections were recorded only at the precinct level, and were not tallied by locality. In these instances, because the folios are too large to photocopy, election data from every precinct, by every locality, had to be transcribed into notebooks by hand. These data were then entered into spreadsheets so that they could be summed by locality, and then entered, with the rest of the returns, into the larger metropolitan spreadsheets. Therefore, gathering historical data from Wayne and Macomb Counties presented difficulties of the sort that can only be overcome through the individual efforts of researchers who are able to work in the field, and engage local elections officials under a variety of challenging circumstances diplomatically and effectively. But as such challenges explain the present absence of the sort of elections database that this study will produce, they also illustrate the practical urgency of this project, since so much of the older electoral records are very vulnerable. The forgoing discussion should also make clear that the applicant and research staff are completely experienced with the process of acquiring the electoral data.

**Figure 2: Timeline**

|                               | Year 1 |    |    |    | Year 2 |    |    |    |
|-------------------------------|--------|----|----|----|--------|----|----|----|
|                               | Q1     | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1     | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Identify and instruct experts |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Identify data collectors      |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Construct survey              |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Identify referenda            |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Train data collectors         |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Implement survey              |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Collect electoral data        |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Analyze survey data           |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Analyze and write report      |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Construct electoral dataset   |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Geocode data                  |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |
| Final data products           |        |    |    |    |        |    |    |    |

### Method and Procedures:

This study will gather demographic, census, election, and survey research data from a representative sample of 12 of the nation's largest metropolitan regions. The regions will be defined as they are by the United States Bureau of the Census as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) or as Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs) in the 2000 Decennial Census Reports. The primary local units of analysis within these regions will be the county subdivisions or communities that have the status of Place or Census Defined Place. Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas, or CMSAs, which are comprised of two or more PMSAs, will not be used, principally because the

presence of multiple major metropolitan centers within them would make the subsequent categorization and comparative analysis of all of their respective localities too complex.

The selection of metropolitan regions for this study was guided by theoretical and methodological considerations. Theoretically, the sample must be as representative as possible of the range of urban areas that comprise metropolitan America. Methodologically, the sample regions, and localities that comprise them, need to produce sufficient numbers of regional and local spatial analytical units. Thus, urban areas have been selected based on the following criteria.

*Regional and sub-regional distribution:* Since so much about a city's character (environmental, historical, economic, demographic, cultural), is connected to its geographical location, the spatial distribution of sample regions has the highest priority among the theoretically determined criteria. To ensure a geographically representative sample, three of the project's sample urban areas will come from each of the four Census regions (Northeast, South, Midwest, and West); none of the urban areas selected are especially close to any of the others.

*Size:* Project sampling favors larger, rather than smaller, metropolitan regions wherever possible. On a pragmatic level, the inclusion of larger metropolitan regions will insure that a larger proportion of metropolitan America is represented in the sample. Metropolitan levels of environmental, social, economic, demographic, and even cultural and sub-cultural diversity are highly correlated with size. Larger areas, generally speaking, are more diverse than are smaller areas, and so more representative of the gamut of qualities that characterize metropolitan America more generally.

*Demographic character:* The selection of metropolitan regions explicitly considers the larger demographic differences among metropolitan regions. Selection of too many metropolitan areas with similar overall demographic profiles was avoided. Primary demographic features considered included race/ethnicity, income, unemployment, poverty, and housing stock (age and value).

*Economic and historical identity:* On a qualitative level, some selections are made to maximize the diversity of the urban regions included. As these areas are understood generally by their places in the larger historical and economic life of the nation, this consideration may increase interest in, and the use of, the database by the widest possible variety and number of scholars and other interested persons.

The consideration of some methodological issues in the selection of metropolitan regions for this project presents greater challenges. These principally relate to the need to identify metropolitan regions that, along with their respective localities, produce sufficient numbers of diversely defined local units of analysis (places) amenable to the electoral and survey research purposes of the project. The principal challenges to this effort are metropolitan areas that are characterized by:



*Small numbers of large localities:* For the purposes of this study, metropolitan regions that are comprised of only a few localities, one, more, or all of which are quite large in population, in proportion to the region as a whole, are poor candidates for inclusion because they do not include useful numbers of sufficiently well defined localities. Although interesting studies could be made of relationships between patterns of metropolitan space and political perspectives, attitudes, and actions within these regions, such studies would require a fundamentally different research design than that which is used in this study. To make such an accommodation for this study, which would mean constructing and applying more than one geographic unit of analysis, would make little sense, since this study seeks to explore localities not merely as one of any of a variety of spatial identifiers, but also as entities especially capable of structuring distributions of people, activities, opportunities, interests, and even perspectives within and around them.

*Multiple centers:* Metropolitan regions containing multiple urban centers are also problematic, because the presence of multiple major urban centers makes the definition of many of the localities that are positioned in the inter-polar spaces of these regions especially difficult to define. These regions include the greater New York and Los Angeles regions. At first, this seems unfortunate, since these are the nation's largest urban regions. And yet, their enormous size, multi-polarity, and all around eccentricity in relation to most of the nation's other large urban areas make them especially amenable to unique approaches to the study of relationships between place and political attitudes and actions.

The metropolitan regions that have been selected for this study are: Midwest: Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis; Northeast: Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburgh; South: Atlanta, Nashville, Charlotte; West: Phoenix, Denver, Portland. Greater detail justifying the selection of each of these metropolitan areas along with discussion of those such as Los Angeles not chosen is available at: [www.gusp.msu.edu](http://www.gusp.msu.edu) under "research."

### The Electoral Data:

#### *Local Tallies of Votes for Local and National Office:*

The core of the Metroamerica Votes database will be a set of vote tallies for all candidates for local and national office for all municipalities and county sub-divisions (localities) that have populations over 10,000 (in the year 2000) that are included in the study's twelve sample metropolitan regions. This information will include votes cast for major candidates for President, United States Senator, and Representative to Congress for all counties, cities, towns, and, where possible, villages. National vote tallies will be included for all national elections from 1960 to the year 2008. The 1960 starting point is chosen largely because post-war extra-city suburbanization/municipal proliferation had begun in earnest by that time. Thus the data for this study will start just after the beginning of the development of the metropolitan political geography that defines our urban regions today. Prior to 1960, for most of the nation's larger metropolitan areas, central city voting returns were nearly comprehensive of election returns for their respective metropolitan regions. Additionally, the Census reports improve significantly

in 1960 in ways that reflect this historical and continuing growth and proliferation of independent suburban localities. In that year, Census records for individual suburban localities become much more detailed and otherwise available. And so, it makes little sense to talk about an inter-municipal metropolitan political geography for many of the nation's urban regions much before 1960 because such hardly existed in most of the nation's larger urban regions prior to that point. And what did exist before 1960 remains largely un-measurable, owing to a lack of historical data in the Census records. Yet, starting data collection in 1960 is critical to ensure data availability back to the point of historic import for metropolitan areas; the point just after which population shifts to suburban communities started in earnest.

The gathering and coding of local and locally tallied national election returns will normally be conducted simultaneously, since both types of returns are generally kept by counties within the same records files. Local (and County) election data selected for this study will include returns from races for local legislators and executives (county executives, county legislators, mayors, town supervisors, city and town council members, et cetera). Local election data will also include returns for such state, county, and local ballot initiatives or referenda (including the number, title, and texts or synopses thereof) for the same time period and set of elections as are identified as essentially significant by regional investigators.

For all elections, the study will include a variety of secondary indicators, such as turnout rates (votes cast as a percentage of voting aged population), party pluralities, votes for a candidate as percentages of total votes, and so on. Party registration figures may also be included to the extent available. All election data will be place coded or "geocoded" using contemporary Census place codes.

#### *A Core of Census Information:*

The database will include a selection of decade-to-decade geocoded census information for all metropolitan areas included in the project sample, their constituent counties, and their municipalities and towns. Data will include, but not be limited to, indicators of the following: population, voting aged population, education, employment, nativity, house value, quality, age, and quantity of housing stock, residence tenure, commuting, income, poverty, race and ethnicity, local government structure, date of municipal incorporation. Some variables, particularly population and voting age population, will be extrapolated between Census reports to produce estimates for each national election year. Most of the others will simply be listed by decade. Where Census information is already available in compatible electronic format, additional Census data may be included.

#### *Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enabling:*

Because all information included in the database (Census indicators, election returns, and survey responses) will be geocoded using standard Census Bureau spatial codes, the data will be available for easy analysis using any of a variety of spatial analytic (GIS) software packages or through more traditional statistical analytic programs, such

as SPSS (Statistical Program for the Social Sciences). Furthermore, the entire project dataset, or limited portions thereof, will be available for expansion by individual scholars to include any of a variety of additional information.

#### *Municipal Structure and Process:*

Although many electoral parameters are determined at the state level (and can be described on a state-by-state basis), data on municipal structure and process will be drawn from the 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, and 2006 Municipal Form of Government Surveys conducted by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and added to the database. These local structure and process traits can be used in conjunction with both the electoral and attitudinal/cultural portions of the project. Information contained within these datasets include: partisan/nonpartisan elections, structure of the chief executive and council, methods of selecting department heads, powers of the chief executive, processes for referenda and initiative, terms, background and race/ethnicity of council members, nature of committees, staff, and meeting frequency. Although data are not available prior to 1981, the likelihood of significant change can be established from the existing six data points.

#### The Survey Data:

The citizen survey will be written by the project design team in consultation with staff at IPPSR. To the extent possible, standard questions regarding political behavior, ideology, and demographics will be employed. Other cultural questions related to volunteering, giving, and community activity will match those used on the Roper Social Benchmark survey to allow for the comparability of results. Topics identified in research on local culture as being of possible importance will also inform the selection of survey content (see for example Reese and Rosenfeld, 2002; Sharp 2005, 2007; Naff and Deleon, 2004).

Although the final survey will be designed during the grant period, the research team has identified the topics in Figure 3 to be included. Only those topics in italics involve questions not already used regularly in public opinion surveys. Demographic question formats will match those of the census. Questions for the Ideological Culture Attitudes will be drawn from those used in the Social Benchmark Study. With the exception of the co-production activities, all questions for the Political/Civic Participation section will be drawn from those used in the National Election Studies. Again while standard question formats are being drawn from the studies noted, they are not a suitable substitute for the current project because it is impossible to use the municipality as the unit of analysis or, in the case of the SBS, samples are not representative or generalizable. Very few items in the Figure will require the development of new, untested survey questions.

**Figure 3: Citizen Survey Topics**

|   |
|---|
| <p><b><u>Demographics (Census)</u></b><br/>Race/Ethnicity, Own/rent/tenure, Age, Education, Job, Gender, Marital status, Same sex household, Children</p> <p><b><u>Civic Culture Attitudes</u></b><br/><i>Diversity tolerance (race, ethnicity, lifestyle), Civic tolerance, Trust, Conflict tolerance, Community goals, Risk tolerance, Civic duty, Charitable giving, Identification with: Region, Municipality, Neighborhood, School district, Neighborhood school, Local sports team</i></p> <p><b><u>Ideological Culture (Social Benchmark)</u></b><br/>Partisanship, Political ideology, Religion, Religiosity, Efficacy, Trust, National party identification</p> <p><b><u>Political/Civic Participation (NES)</u></b><br/>Voting, Volunteering, Contacting, Protesting, Partisan activity, Neighborhood organizations, Petitions, Union membership, Co-production of services</p> <p><b><u>Local Electoral Behavior</u></b><br/><i>Voted in last city council election, school board election, millage election? How recently voted on ballot initiative?</i></p> <p><b><u>Public Services</u></b><br/><i>Rate the importance of the following local services (Likert scale): Public transit, Planning, Infrastructure, Economic development, Libraries, Schools, Public safety, Recreation, Arts/culture, Downtown</i></p> |
|---|

Election data, along with a sampling of contextual information from the Bureau of the Census, will be gathered for every Census Place or Census Defined Place (locality) that is included within the study's 12 sample metropolitan regions that had a population of greater than 10,000 persons in the year 2000. Unfortunately, there are 538 such places in total. Because it would be prohibitively expensive to survey residents of each of these localities in statistically significant numbers, surveys will be conducted only within a sample of 10 places within each metropolitan area, producing a survey research sample of 120 localities. Generally speaking, these will be comprised of the ten largest places included within each of their respective regions.

In preparation for this project, localities within the 12 metropolitan areas have been identified and basic census data examined (race/ethnicity, income, unemployment, poverty, nature of housing stock and so on) for each. The purpose was to verify that the 10 largest localities included within each of the sample metropolitan regions would, when considered together, be sufficiently varied and representative of their respective region.<sup>iii</sup> Complete data for this analysis are available at [www.gusp.msu.edu](http://www.gusp.msu.edu) under "research." Although the minimum size of survey sample localities will be 10,000, there will be considerable variation in the sizes of municipalities included in each metropolitan area. This is acceptable since the key to the study is having enough municipalities within each metropolitan area to explore variation in local civic and political culture.

The citizen telephone surveys will result in at least 350 completed interviews from each of the 120 localities included in this portion of the study, to achieve an error rate of plus

or minus 5%. Sampling will be conducted using standard IPPSR procedures working with either Survey Sampling, Inc., or Genesys of the Marketing Systems Group to generate the telephone samples for each of the cities. Both have significant experience working on major federal research projects. Overall, the telephone number sampling plan involves a truncated, disproportionately stratified, list-assisted sample of phone numbers tied to each of the targeted cities. For each city, the sampling frame of telephone numbers will be constructed from the area code + exchange sets active in that city. The blocks of 100 numbers formed by the combination of each active area code + exchange + first two digits of the four digit suffix will be generated. Each 100-block will then be compared against telephone directory databases and the count of directory listed numbers within each 100-block determined.<sup>iv</sup> To improve cooperation, when a phone number has an associated directory listing, the listing for the name and address of the householder or phone subscriber will be extracted and used to send a notification letter in advance of any calls. The letter will briefly describe the study, its purpose and importance, how the household came to be selected, and the voluntary and confidential nature of the household's participation. Since a randomly selected adult is the desired respondent, IPPSR will use the Trohldahl-Carter technique to randomly select one adult from among the household provided count of numbers of eligible adults and numbers of eligible males (females=total-males) as the targeted respondent.

#### Analysis and Use of the data:

Although the data collection efforts involve a complex of activities and sources, the resulting data set will be malleable and relatively easy to use by urban scholars. The consistent unit of analysis is the local place or locality. As with census data, individual survey responses will be aggregated by locality. Thus, each unit of analysis (locality) will have data for: electoral patterns at the local, state and national levels; referenda and initiative voting data; census data (aggregated from individuals), government structure and process data, and citizen survey responses (aggregated from individuals) covering political ideology, social behaviors, political behaviors, support for various public services and so on.

Although municipal-level data can be aggregated by county or metropolitan area if scholars wish, the basic unit of analysis consistently remains the locality. Using this single unit database, researchers can explore differences among municipalities, among municipalities within the same metropolitan area, differences across metropolitan areas, and the internal traits of single localities if they are conducting a case study.

Two caveats are important here regarding overall project design, and particularly regarding the survey portion of the research, and future research plans. Clearly, the local and national electoral dataset will be longitudinal while the culture survey data will be, at the end of the two-year project period, cross-sectional. There is obviously no way to retrieve historic public opinion and political culture data. Thus, the project will provide urban scholars with the changing patterns of local and national electoral behavior over time and a current sense of ideological and political and civic culture. In part, the inclusion of historic census data will allow for exploration of some ideological/ cultural aspects to the extent that census data are valid proxies for citizen

survey data (see Sharpe, 2005 for an analysis of this). Future work will still be needed to add critical elements to the data set. Such efforts can be conducted by individual scholars, or as planned, by the applicant, research team, and their respective institutions. Three future activities are:

- Citizen surveys in the same municipalities over time, ideally at, at least, ten-year intervals.
- Measurement of local public policies over time.
- Elite surveys of local officials and opinion-leaders to assess the extent of variation from citizen attitudes and provide a more detailed assessment of local policy-making practices.

Future efforts could also include analyses of local budget data, ordinances, and media reports; or case studies or local officials' surveys focusing on local policy content (see Reese and Rosenfeld 2002 for examples of policy data collection). The second caveat regards the purposive sample of metropolitan areas. Ideally, municipalities would be selected for analysis based on random assignment. This is simply not feasible; the large number of communities that would need to be included to provide valid numbers of citizen responses in each municipality would be cost prohibitive. The selection criteria just described assure that metropolitan areas are the largest and most representative in their regions, given local structural constraints. The inclusion of multiple localities within each area will allow for a valid assessment of cultural variation within regions.

#### Broader Impacts:

The proposed project will have broader impact in each of several areas:

*Integrates research and education; promotes teaching and training; broadens participation of underrepresented groups.* The Global Urban Studies program at MSU, as the administering unit, will hire graduate assistants to work on this project; it has a track record of hiring and training a racially and ethnically diverse group of GRAs (current GRA profiles can be viewed at [www.gusp.msu.edu](http://www.gusp.msu.edu)). The two GRAs funded by the project will be selected from underrepresented groups and will participate in all aspects of the research and educational activities. These students will also prepare their own papers for presentation at scholarly meetings and for publication in scholarly journals. Data from the project will be ideal for use in graduate and undergraduate classes focusing on local politics as well as general social science research methods and analysis courses and will be readily available from the IPPSR and from the Institute for Social Research (ISR) data archives.

*Enhances research infrastructure including partnerships:* The project research team includes faculty at six academic institutions and local experts at an additional ten, and thus inherently establishes collaboration between institutions. The primary goal of the project—to create a national metropolitan voting and public opinion database, directly upgrades the computational infrastructure, specifically by creating new types of information tools in the form of large databases.

*Results will be disseminated broadly:* The database will be made available for urban scholars via IPPSR and ISR at the University of Michigan within one year of its creation. It will be disseminated through their digital libraries and other venues such as electronic downloads and CD-ROMs. The project PI has a long record of working with public officials through policy evaluations, presentations at workshops and other practitioner venues, in trade publications and through direct policy advice. This research will have implications for a host of local policies from economic development to voter registration to race relations. Results will be provided to policy-makers in a variety of formats, including publication in non-technical literature and on websites (CD-ROMs, press kits), presentations to state and local public officials through workshops and professional conferences, and policy briefs.

*Benefits to society at large:* The significance of the project goes beyond the needs of academicians and professional political analysts. Essential to democracies are popular governance and the rule of law, universal access to the political process and political information, and a sense of common or public history. It is remarkable, therefore, that the United States does not maintain a national record of its electoral past. The project will result in an accessible and easy to use database that will represent a very substantial first step towards filling this gap in the record of American democracy.

The database will be used by social scientists for a variety of important academic purposes. It will also be used by journalists, writers, and all variety of students of history and politics to give greater geographical and historical context to their understandings of, and stories about, American politics. The large national database will allow urban scholars around the world to analyze, interpret, and synthesize research with tools heretofore not available for urban researchers. The models and methods used for this study can be duplicated for other metropolitan areas within the US and can be applied to other national contexts for further comparative work. As noted above, results also have direct policy applications for local, regional, and state officials and agencies.

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<sup>i</sup> An important element in the discussion of civic culture is to explicitly identify what is not civic culture. There are features of the environment of cities that certainly impact the local culture but are not part of it (see first column in Figure 1). While these variables almost certainly shape the nature of local cultures they are part of the background environment, not the culture itself. Variables such as location, region, local fiscal health, inter-city competition, and form of government are also not part of the local culture; they provide the frame in which the culture operates. As with most exogenous variables, these aspects of the local milieu are not easily changed. Indeed, while government structure can be altered, the processes for doing so (typically charter commissions, revisions and referenda) are complex and time consuming. It should be noted that these definitions are non-recursive.

<sup>ii</sup> Although not formally co-PIs, the research oversight team represents nationally known urban scholars who will provide advice and assistance in survey development and other theoretical and conceptual aspects of the project. The research oversight team was also instrumental in the design of the project and in the selection of metropolitan areas for study. Letters of support from these scholars are included in the additional documentation section.

<sup>iii</sup> Small adjustments will need to be made to the selection of localities for the Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, and Pittsburgh regions to ensure that they are broadly representative of their municipalities. To accomplish this, one or two of the ten largest localities in each of these regions that represent a redundancy within the sample will be

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substituted by a place or by places that contribute to the representative quality of the sample, as that is measured by these basic demographic and economic measures.

<sup>iv</sup> All 100-blocks with 0 listed phone numbers will be dropped from the frame. All blocks of 100 numbers with 1 or more listed numbers will be retained for subsequent sampling. Within the 1+ blocks, all phone numbers will be separated into two strata, those numbers with a directory listing and those with no directory listing. Samples of phone numbers will be selected randomly from within both strata, but the stratum of listed numbers will be sampled at a higher rate. Since the listed numbers have a much greater likelihood of being working household numbers, this focuses more sampling and interviewing resources on sample that is more likely to yield interviews. Should some of the 100-blocks be associated with more than a single city within, the stratum of listed numbers would then be subdivided into those numbers for which the directory listed address places them in one city and those numbers for which the directory listed address places them in a different city. The not-listed phone numbers associated with that 100-block would be re-allocated to whichever of the two cities accounts for the plurality of the listed numbers in the block. The counts of numbers within strata on the sampling frame will be retained for post-stratification weighting to adjust for unequal probabilities of selection across strata. This plan assumes that exchanges or blocks dedicated to businesses, schools, hospitals, faxes, computers, etc. will be dropped from the sampling frame prior to selecting samples. In this estimate, it also assumes that exchanges or blocks dedicated to cell phones will also be excluded from the frame.

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