THE LOCAL POLITICAL INCORPORATION OF NEW IMMIGRANTS IN NON-TRADITIONAL GATEWAYS: A CASE STUDY OF BROCKTON, MA AND LOWELL, MA

A dissertation presented

By

Victoria Schow

to
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1965 repeal of America’s immigration system of quotas that privileged northern and western Europeans while restricting immigrants from Asia and Africa, the percent foreign born has significantly grown and these new immigrants are radically reshaping America’s racial and ethnic composition. Additionally, while in the past new immigrants tended to settle in just a handful of cities like New York and Los Angeles, since the 1990s, many mid-size cities in the United States have experienced drastic demographic changes as new immigrants are choosing to directly settle in a variety of locations. Soon these immigrants will wield significant electoral power. However, many of the resources that typically aid in immigrant political inclusion are lacking in new destinations.

The purpose of this study is to nuance existing sociological literature on the political inclusion of new immigrants in new gateway cities, particularly in regards to geography and diversity of immigrant characteristics. This is done through an institution-level analysis of two cities in New England: Lowell, MA and Brockton, MA. These cities were selected for study because of their similar manufacturing history, population size, distance from Boston, and because their new immigrant populations – predominantly Cape Verderan and Haitian in Brockton and Cambodian in Lowell – expand the immigrant groups that have typically been studied.

This analysis used a variety of methodological means, including 1) 45 interviews conducted with elected officials, street-level bureaucrats, and religious and immigrant community leaders; 2) analysis of publicly available documents; and 3) participant observation at City Council meetings, public hearings, and community events.
This research revealed that elected officials are making few changes to incorporate new immigrants, though racial minorities and female elected officials are more likely to have outreach strategies. In City Hall, there are no formal policies for the inclusion of new immigrants. For public school employees and police officers, federal and state regulations have led to more formalized policies to meet the needs of new immigrants. Of methods typically used to politically incorporate new immigrants in traditional gateway cities, the only similar approach observed in this study is political incorporation of new immigrants through ethnic organizations.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAR Corrective Action Plan
CPR Coordinated Program Review
DOJ Department of Justice
ELE English Language Education
ELL English Language Learner
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, many mid-size cities in the United States have experienced drastic demographic changes as new immigrants are choosing to directly settle in a variety of locations in addition to traditional gateway cities like New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Miami, and Chicago. While a new area of sociological research has been established to study this trend towards “new destinations,” most research has focused on the economic and sociocultural components of incorporation. This dissertation contributes to the literature on new destinations by investigating how political incorporation is occurring in post-industrial, non-traditional gateway cities in New England.

While existing research on the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateway cities may be applicable, there is reason to doubt its complete relevance to non-traditional gateway cities. Emerging research on new destinations is finding that the social and economic incorporation of immigrants differs in fundamental ways from incorporation in traditional gateways, including in immigration history, size, and the existence and strength of institutional arrangements (Waters and Jiménez, 2005). While the way in which the sum of these key differences affects the immigrant experience is still being explored, some early work has demonstrated that the lack of a more recent immigrant history may have positive outcomes because intergroup relations are not yet crystallized, giving immigrants more freedom to define their position in the community (Zúñiga and Hernández-León, 2005). Also, because these new destinations are much smaller in size than the traditional gateway cities, complete social isolation, in this case meaning infrequent interactions with the native born population, is less likely to occur, even with residential segregation (Waters and Jiménez, 2005; Park and Iceland,
However, the existence of institutional arrangements that aid in immigrant assimilation in traditional gateways, like legal aid, health clinics, social organizations, and bilingual services, tend to be lacking in new destinations. Additionally, while the governmental bureaucracies and non-profits in established gateways have experience with navigating immigrant problems and issues, new destinations largely are not equipped to handle these needs (Waters and Jiménez, 2005; Donato, Tolbert, Nucci, and Kawano, 2008).

Extending the new destinations research to the political sphere is critical because participation in the local political process, such as forming advocacy groups, voting, and running for and holding political office, is a key way for all citizens to be engaged in their local community. For immigrants in particular, inclusion in local politics also leads to better integration and acceptance in the community. As of 2014, the share of all foreign born residents who have become naturalized U.S. citizens is 46 percent, which is the highest level in thirty years and an 18 percentage point increase since 1990 (2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Lopez, Passel, and Rohal, 2015). However, naturalized citizens tend to consistently have lower rates of political participation than native citizens and are significantly less likely to hold political office. This political exclusion of immigrants in American local politics often means that in cities with large concentrations of immigrants, the elected officials are not representative of their community. While there is no obvious requirement for elected officials to be demographically representative of the population to best represent the community’s needs, not having political representation that looks like you has been connected with political disempowerment (Howell and Fagan, 1988; Bobo and Gilliam, 1990; Pantoja and Segura, 2003; Banducci, Donovan, and Karp, 2004).
From my analysis, the current research on new gateway communities is lacking in four major ways: political dimension, geography, diversity in ethnicity and characteristics of the immigrants, and level of analysis. As has already been stated, few studies exist that investigate the political incorporation of immigrants in non-traditional gateway cities. Moreover, the new destinations literature that does focus on political incorporation almost exclusively focuses on Latino and Asian immigrants in Texas or on the West Coast, particularly California, where immigration has been historically sizeable. While understanding the incorporation of immigrants from these groups and in these locations is important, we need additional research that includes cities with different ethnic communities in a variety of locations in order to capture the nuances of the immigrant experience and the differing challenges local governments might have in incorporating these new constituents. For example, the Asian and Latino immigrants, who are largely featured in prior research, are usually found to be economically disadvantaged compared to the surrounding native-born residents (Singer, 2004). This difference in economic advantage is often identified as a key reason for the political disenfranchisement of immigrants. However, not all new immigrants are more poor than their surrounding community members. Finally, much of the existing research focuses on individual characteristics of the immigrants, similar to assimilation literature. However, an institutional level analysis is also needed.

For my research, I conducted an institutional analysis of the ways elected officials, city hall government employees, the local police forces, and the public education systems in New England are adapting their policies and routines to recognize and accommodate the increasingly large presence of immigrants in these non-traditional gateway communities. This institutional level of analysis allowed me to differentiate between the actions of individual actors without losing sight of the way in which institutions are more than just the sum of their parts. The
The purpose of this research was also to nuance existing sociological literature in regards to dimension, geography, and diversity of immigrant characteristics. This was done through a case study of immigrant political incorporation in two non-traditional immigrant gateways in Massachusetts: Brockton, MA and Lowell, MA, which includes large immigrant groups from places like Cape Verde, Haiti, and Cambodia.

**Research Questions**

This dissertation addresses two main questions. First, in what ways are elected officials, non-elected government employees, local police forces, and public education systems adapting their policies and routines in order to recognize and accommodate the increasingly large presence of immigrants? And second, in what ways does the political incorporation of immigrants in these non-traditional gateways cities differ from the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateways?

The first question is meant to provide a way to assess the political relevance of immigrants to local government in Lowell and Brockton and the second question asks whether the political incorporation of immigrants in these non-traditional gateway cities is qualitatively different than in traditional gateway cities. These are important facets to examine because currently, little is known about this process. Without a clear understanding of how and in what ways immigrants are currently being incorporated in New England’s new immigrant gateways, a strategy for improving and expanding inclusive actions cannot be employed. Additionally, understanding the ways in which the political inclusion differs from traditional gateway cities allows for a nuanced approach to inclusivity; political inclusion strategies used in traditional gateway cities may not be relevant if the experiences of new immigrants in new immigrant gateways is qualitatively different.
New England's Gateway Cities

Even though the term “new gateway” is frequently used to describe these non-traditional gateway cities, many cities classified as such, particularly in New England, are really re-emerging immigrant gateways. These re-emerging gateway cities flourished with immigrants during the industrial era and then waned as destinations after WWII; the new wave of immigrants only resumed in the 1980s and 1990s. In the case of New England’s re-emerging gateways, the first waves of immigrants that helped build these now post-industrial cities were almost exclusively white European immigrants; the new immigrants tend to be racial minorities.

There is not currently a consistent definition of a new destination city. In 2008, Singer, Hardwick, and Brettell proposed a typology of six gateways, which included former, continuous, post-WWII, emerging, re-emerging, and pre-emerging as categories. This typology is largely based on the time period in which the foreign-born percentage began to increase and was only applied to cities with populations over one million at the time of the 2000 census. Many researchers never offer a specific definition, instead merely referring to new destinations as locations that have had little prior experience with immigrants (Marrow, 2009; Massey, 2008; Zúñiga and Hernández-León, 2005).

In 2009, the Massachusetts state legislature defined the term “gateway city” in state law as any city with a population greater than 35,000 but less than 250,000, a median household income and a per capita income below the statewide average, and a rate of educational attainment of a bachelor’s degree or higher that is below the state average. Under this definition, twenty-six cities are considered Gateway Cities and thus qualify for certain state grants, tax credits, and investments in economic and community development.
For this research, a new destination city, will be a city that has a population of at least 60,000 inhabitants and at least 15 percent of the population is foreign born, the city has seen at least a 40 percent increase in the foreign born population since 2000, or the city has at least 25 percent of the population that speaks a language other than English at home. This definition offers more specificity than the vague ones offered in most literature but differs from the MA state definition, which fails to identify percent foreign born or even percent who speak a language other than English as criterion. In New England, twenty cities meet these criteria. Another factor that unites New England’s re-emerging gateway cities is that they all suffered economic challenges through much of the twentieth century due to deindustrialization. See Table 1.1 for additional information about the demographics of these New England cities.

Also, while most of the census data reported in this research only relates to the foreign born, I also focused my research on the incorporation of second generation immigrants. Furthermore, many of the so called 1.5 generation immigrants, those who immigrated to the United States before or during their early teens, tend to align their experiences of political inclusion more with second generation immigrants than with their parents, so such distinctions will be made in later chapters.

The two cities examined for this research were selected because their new immigrant populations vary greatly from those studied in other new destinations research, specifically in ethnicity and in economic characteristics, particularly in that Lowell’s and Brockton’s new immigrants are not more poor than the surrounding population. Brockton was also selected because, as a former resident of Brocton, I have established relationships that allowed for greater access. Moreover, my prior residency in Brockton gave me a deeper understanding of the
surprising underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in local politics. Additional compelling demographic information about the cities used in this case study are discussed in Chapter Three.

**Guiding Theoretical Frameworks**

Four sociological theories guided this exploration into the political incorporation of immigrants in Brockton and Lowell and informed the development of interview questions. The first two theories, ethnic competition theory and contact theory, are theoretical approaches I used for understanding attitudes towards immigrants, particularly on the basis of the master status characteristics of the immigrant communities and the elected and non-elected government officials. The next two theories, rational political exchange theory and the theory of social construction of target populations in public policy helped guide my understanding of how and why public-private partnerships developed between local government officials and immigrant communities. Thus, ethnic competition theory and contact theory were used as guides for a spectrum of explanations for the interpersonal feelings and interactions I observed between city government and immigrant communities during my research. Likewise, rational political exchange theory and the theory of social construction of target populations in public policy provided a range of explanations for the development of political partnerships. These four theories were selected to guide this dissertation based on their efficacy as demonstrated in prior research relevant to this topic. The relevance of these theoretical explanations to the political inclusion of immigrants as it is occurring in Lowell, MA and Brockton, MA will be revisited in the conclusion.

**Ethnic Competition Theory**

Hubert Blalock’s (1967) power-threat theory purports that the size of the minority population must be a paramount consideration in any research involving minorities because
larger proximate populations of racial or ethnic minorities corresponds with increased white racial hostility. Blalock’s (1967) original argument is that a perceived threat to a group’s position is what drives this racial antagonism, portraying racial discrimination as a by-product of competition for scarce resources. This power-threat felt by the dominant group is usually conceptualized in two dimensions: economic and political threat. More recently, power-threat theory, which has largely been used to analyze white-black relationships, has been repurposed to explore anti-immigrant attitudes, and in the process, has been renamed ethnic competition theory.

In ethnic competition theory, the main assumption is that attitudes and behaviors between groups primarily serve to maintain a group’s status position, resources, and culture in terms of identity and values (Schneider, 2008). Therefore, ethnic competition theory suggests a positive relationship between out-group size and anti-immigrant attitudes among the majority. In support of ethnic competition theory, in a study of twenty-one European countries using the European Social Survey, Schneider (2008) found that the higher the percent of non-western immigrants, the higher a country’s average level of perceived ethnic threat. However, she found that this is not a purely linear relationship; at higher levels of out-group size, the out-group size does not continually increase ethnic threat perceptions.

In his research on the changing dynamics of racial discrimination, Markert (2010) provides a U.S. example of the application of ethnic competition theory to understanding the relationships that develop between dominant groups and immigrants. Specifically, Markert (2010) investigates the relationships between whites and Hispanics as well as blacks and Hispanics through a content analysis of The New York Times between 1996 and 2005 and regional newspapers between 1980 and 2005. Markert (2010) concludes that language
suggesting Hispanics to be an economic, political, and cultural threat is very common and consistent with ethnic competition theory.

**Contact Theory**

Gordon Allport's (1954) book *The Nature of Prejudice* pioneered social theory on why groups discriminate, with the conclusion that stereotypes and prejudgment were not atypical and, unfortunately, all too human. His suggestion of how society might alleviate inter-group racial conflict is group interaction. Allport's (1954) suggestion is commonly known as contact theory. It is hypothesized that increased contact between members of different racial groups leads to more positive attitudes towards those of a different racial group.

Today, Allport's (1954) contact theory hypothesis remains a widely accepted explanation for the existence of racial and ethnic discrimination. Public policy aimed at alleviating racial inequality, including desegregation and affirmative action, use notions from contact theory. The Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* was based partially on the notion that segregation impedes cultural awareness that can be gained through integration (Dixson and Rosenbaum, 2004). When the Fair Housing Act of 1968 was being debated, one argument made in favor of the law was that it would “overcome the ignorance and fears of whites which previously had blocked attempts to lower the black-white barrier” (Dixson and Rosenbaum, 2004 [Dubofsky, 1969:154]).

Extending this theoretical approach beyond white-black relationships, Schneider (2008) finds contact theory to be a complementary explanation to ethnic competition theory for anti-immigrant attitudes. One outcome of her study was that contact with immigrants by the dominant in-group limits ethnic threat perceptions, especially in high immigration contexts where there are more contact opportunities. Therefore, the support she found for ethnic
competition theory in that the increased size of the immigrant group increases anti-immigrant perceptions was weaker for individuals with increased contact with immigrants than for individuals without. In other words, while the size of the immigrant group might exacerbate anti-immigrant perspectives, the negative attitudes might be reduced through ‘constructive’ intergroup contact. Therefore, instances that might promote friendship rather than simply short-term acquaintanceship reduce the perceived ethnic threat.

**Rational Political Exchange Theory**

Rational political exchange theory purports that when immigrant communities grow large, elected and nonelected government officials make strategic decisions, like in the distribution of funding to immigrant organizations, in order to achieve political goals. In some instances, as in Marwell’s (2004, 2007) study of social service provisions in eight communities in New York City, this rational political exchange is purported to occur in a rather straightforward manner: elected officials supply immigrant community organizations with resources via government contracts and these community organizations return the favor through patronage jobs and services to those who support the elected officials, as well as votes to the incumbents.

In some instances, rational political exchange theory is a little more complex. For example, Frasure and Jones-Correa (2010) find that local nonelected officials also participate in this exchange by off-loading human and social service work to immigrant organizations in order to overcome language and cultural barriers without increasing the fiscal or human resources necessary to serve these constituents. Elected officials support this because they can take credit for programs with minimal use of local government resources, thus potentially building future
support among immigrant communities with few political costs that might be associated with very visible investment in the new immigrant residents.

However, in some instances this rational political exchange is applied against the new immigrant communities. For instance, Ramakrishnan and Wong (2010) find that as an immigrant community grows large, political factors, like the partisanship of local residents, can have the effect of increasing the amount of anti-immigrant ordinances that are proposed and passed in order to garner votes from native-born supporters. Similarly, Hopkins (2010) found that national anti-immigrant sentiments are politicized into feelings of threat at the local level and that demographic changes increases the probability of local elected officials proposing and passing anti-immigrant ordinances in order to generate votes amongst the native-born constituents who feel threatened.

Theory of Social Construction of Target Populations in Public Policy

While rational political exchange theory provides a straight-forward explanation of why some public-private partnerships might develop between elected officials and immigrant communities or anti-immigrant policies, with the relationship plausibly varying on whether the immigrant communities constitute a substantial portion of the voting population, its explanations are limited to two options: political exchange and partisanship. The theory of social construction of target populations in public policy allows for the introduction of alternative mechanisms that might influence the relationship between city government and immigrant communities. This theoretical approach, introduced by Schneider and Ingram (1993), contends that social constructions of target populations influence policy agendas and resources. These social constructions serve as powerful influences on elected officials and the community at large as to who is deserving of public attention, what government should do for the group, and the
appropriate participatory patterns for the group. The theoretical approach places the focus on the rationale and assumptions of elected officials, instead of simply assuming that a group’s political power (in this case, the size of the immigrant community that are voters) or needs result in particular political agendas or actions.

This theoretical approach was utilized by de Graauw, Gleason, and Bloemraad (2013) in their study of distribution of local resources to immigrants. As previously mentioned, they found that many new destination cities free ride on the funding that nearby traditional gateway cities provide to immigrant organizations and the services those groups deliver, with a primary reason for this freeriding being that government officials in these new destinations employ various narrative strategies that place immigrants outside of the socially constructed target population they wish to serve. Therefore, even if the immigrants are welcomed in the community, the allocation of resources to include the new immigrant communities is minimal.

**Methodology**

This research is based on an extended case study of two New England cities and is comprised of three distinct components: interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. The primary data for this research was collected through forty-five semi-structured interviews. Of the forty-five interviews, eighteen were conducted in Lowell, MA and twenty-seven in Brockton, MA. The interviewees included elected officials, city hall employees, immigrant community leaders, religious leaders of large immigrant congregations, police officers, and educators. See Table 1.2 for a summary of interviews by city. The interviews ranged in length from fifteen minutes to nearly two hours. The average interview lasted forty-five minutes. Most of the interviews were conducted in-person, though a few were conducted via telephone. The interviews focused primarily on four dimensions of local government:
communication, the designation of local resources, local policing strategies, and the public education system. Interviews with elected officials, community leaders, the local police, and public educators were recorded and transcribed. Interviews conducted with City Hall employees were not recorded, though jottings were taken and formal field notes were written immediately following such interactions. Separate interview protocols were developed and approved by Northeastern University’s Institution Review Board to target each type of interviewee: elected officials, city hall employees, local police, public educators, and community leaders. The interview protocols utilized can be found in Appendix A and additional information about tactics used to gain access are discussed in Appendix B.

The participant observation component of this research included attendance at city council meetings, finance committee meetings, flag raisings and other cultural events, public hearings, and visits to numerous city hall departments. The purpose of attending city council and finance committee meetings was threefold: to observe the prevalence of immigrants at these meetings, to view constituents being served by the political process, and to make contact with elected officials whom were difficult to reach via e-mail or phone. Attendance at various flag raisings and other cultural events were a way for me to observe how elected officials engage the immigrant communities and it also allowed me to build relationships with different immigrant groups in Lowell and Brockton. Waiting in line in various city hall departments or sitting on a bench outside of an office provided the opportunity for me to observe the diversity of the staff in different departments and how immigrants, particularly people with limited English proficiency, were helped. Finally, the public hearings allowed me to overserve the diversity of the attendees and how the elected officials or non-elected employees interface with the immigrant community. Approximately 40 hours of participant observation were conducted as part of this research with
the average event lasting for 90 minutes. During these events or meetings, notes were taken and subsequently turned into formal field notes.

All field notes and interview transcripts were analyzed using Dedoose, a cloud-based program for analyzing and coding qualitative data. Transcripts and field notes were uploaded to this program and each document was then thematically coded. Using Glaser’s (1998) grounded theory methodology to analyze my qualitative data, I simultaneously collected data and coded previously collected data, which allowed distinct themes and categories to emerge while also still guiding my research. Categories that ultimately emerged while coding of the data included the role of a city charter in who is ultimately elected, the importance of a city narrative, patterns of communication by elected officials and street-level bureaucrats, the role state or federal policy plays in compelling change, the importance of ethnic celebration, and the way in which political power is valued and sought.

Finally, a document analysis was conducted on several publicly available documents. The purpose of using document analysis as part of this dissertation is to achieve triangulation – the combination on methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Bowen, 2009). By investigating publicly available documents, the statements made in interviews or observed though participant observation might be corroborated or disproved. Additionally, the documents analyzed as part of this research also informed some of the questions asked of interviewees. The use of document analysis in this research also provides supplementary research data and provides a method for tracking change and development over time. Another important feature of document analysis is that documents are non-reactive. That is, they are unaffected by the research process, which helps to counter concerns related to reflexivity.
For the document analysis portion of this research, five years of the publicly available Annual Plans of Lowell and Brockton were examined. The Annual Plan is a document that cities must produce each year documenting their distribution of the federal Community Development Block Grant funds. The Annual Plan describes a city’s outreach process, includes attendance records and public comments offered at the public hearings, and identifies the programs ultimately funded. I used these documents to investigate how immigrant organizations and local citizens were included in this process, particularly in regards to how communication occurs and new organizations are invited to submit proposals for funding.

I also conducted a document analysis of the English Learner Education (ELE) in Public Schools component of Lowell’s and Brockton’s most recent Coordinated Program Review (CPR). A CPR is a compliance investigation conducted every six years by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The CPR uses a two-phase review method where the school district conducts a self-evaluation and then the state does an on-site verification phase. The on-site verification phase lasts approximately five days and involves interviews with administrative, teaching and support staff, surveys of parents of ELE students, a random sample review of student records, and observations of classrooms and other facilities. For the ELE component of the CPR, school districts in Massachusetts are evaluated on eighteen criteria regarding compliance with state and federal laws. A document analysis was also conducted on the required Corrective Action Plans (CAR) written by the districts in response to the criteria in their CPR identified as failing to meet compliance standards. The CPR and CAR provide a clear articulation of how and where Brockton and Lowell are meeting the needs of its ELLs.

Finally, the education and police budgets for Lowell and Brockton were analyzed in order to have a clear understanding of how each city ultimately disperses their resources.
Overall, this research provides nuance to our understanding of the political incorporation of immigrants in the United States and identifies boundary conditions for where this case study of two non-traditional gateway cities in New England diverges from previous research on the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateway cities as well as research on the political inclusion of immigrants in new gateway cities on the West Coast. This research also affirms patterns of immigrant political inclusion found in other research.

**Chapter Outline**

This research is presented in seven chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of existing literature that has guided and informed this dissertation, particularly focusing on research on how immigrants are politically incorporated in traditional gateway cities, examining the new literature on the political incorporation of immigrants in new destinations, and ends with a review of how research on assimilation of immigrants provides broader insight into how the local political incorporation of immigrants in new gateway cities has to be nuanced by several characteristics of the new residents.

The third chapter provides context for what is meant by a re-emerging gateway city in New England by examining the way Brockton’s and Lowell’s manufacturing and immigration history are relevant for understanding the contemporary, post-industrial context. Chapter three also examines the current immigration trends in the case study cities and provides additional details about why the demographics of the city and the new immigrants impact political incorporation. The way a non-traditional gateway city’s space is utilized is also explored, giving careful attention to residential segregation, the organization of the downtown, and the importance of landmarks and destinations within a city. Finally, the way the political structure functions as a mechanism for inclusion and exclusion is looked at, particularly in regards to the political
leanings of a city and the way a city’s charter can impact the representativeness of elected officials, affect how attentive a city’s institutional structure is to immigrant needs, and create lasting change.

Chapter Four exams the way access to and communication with local elected officials occurs for immigrants in Brockton and Lowell. The role cultural events play in creating access to elected officials and the way the age, race, and gender of elected officials effect the political inclusion of new immigrants is also explored. Throughout this chapter, the way the theoretical approaches outlined in the introduction hold relevance in understanding political inclusion of new immigrants in New England’s non-traditional gateway cities is also examined.

Chapter Five pivots to examine the way the institutional structures, as mediated by frontline workers, are changing to meet the needs of the new immigrants. The frontline workers examined in this research are the public educators, the local police officers, and the city hall employees. The specific ways these frontline workers are meeting the needs of the immigrant community through linguistic accommodations and cultural competency are discussed as well as the areas that most hinder the political inclusion of immigrants.

Chapter Six analyzes the designation of and distribution of local resources. While it is easy for an elected official to say he or she cares about the needs of their immigrant communities, tracking the actual designation and distribution of local resources provided a concrete way to measure the relevance immigrants have to city government. The resources analyzed in this chapter are the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds, the allocation of the police force, and the funding of public education programs that specifically target ELLs.
The dissertation ends with a discussion of the central findings and theoretical implications of the preceding chapters, looking specifically at the mechanisms by which political incorporation is successfully occurring in New England’s non-traditional gateway cities and a reflection on whether appreciation and recognition of the new immigrants in a community can be considered political inclusion if it is not also accompanied by institutional power.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% Non-Hispanic White</th>
<th>% Foreign Born</th>
<th># Foreign Born</th>
<th>% Language other than English spoken at home</th>
<th>% Spanish</th>
<th>Most Prominent 19th &amp; 20th Century Industry</th>
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Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2011-2015)
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CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

As described in the introduction, this research is focused on two main questions: First, in what ways are elected officials, non-elected government employees, local police forces, and public education systems adapting their policies and routines in order to recognize and accommodate the increasingly large presence of immigrants? And second, in what ways does the political incorporation of immigrants in these non-traditional gateways cities differ from the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateways? Before diving into the findings from Brockton and Lowell, the two case study cities and in order to appropriately address the research questions, a review of what is known from existing literature is required. This is done by first examining the way political inclusion has been customarily achieved in traditional gateway cities and then also reviewing what is already known about the political inclusion of immigrants in new gateway cities. This chapter ends with a discussion of the ways findings in assimilation literature can also provide context and nuance for the ways in which immigrants in the case study cities are being politically incorporated at the local level.

Traditional Gateways & the Political Inclusion of Immigrants

From the literature on the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateways, we know that some of the key resources that have been most effective in helping immigrants navigate politics in the United States include the political party, unions, the local establishment of public agencies, and ethnic and civic organizations.

Political Parties

One of the key institutions that have shaped the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateways in the United States is the political party. For many years, immigrants have
benefited from the neighborhood-level political mobilization conducted by Republicans and Democrats, particularly voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives. Historically, mobilizing immigrant communities in traditional gateways was a key strategy for political campaigns in urban areas (DeSipio, 2001; Wong, 2006). However, in the last fifteen years we have seen the professionalization of the political party as expenditures and national staff increase (Karp and Banducci, 2007). With this increasing professionalization has come a shift to the centralization of campaigns in national headquarters, which has severely weakened local political machines and party organizations (DeSipio, 2001; Wong, 2006).

Today, political parties have also refined their methods to largely focus resources on “likely voters” and voters that are less costly to reach. Voter characteristics that may make someone easier to contact or identify as a probable voter includes citizens who are known to have a history of participating in previous elections or members of groups such as unions (Karp and Banducci, 2007). Although political parties are still an important tool for political incorporation of immigrants, this new focus on “likely voters” has made many immigrant communities in traditional gateway cities less relevant in contemporary political strategies since they have lower rates of political participation than native-born citizens. In the 2010 mid-term elections, naturalized citizens were found to be about half as likely to register to vote, and about 40 percent less likely to vote compared to native citizens (Crissey and File, 2012).

However, the growing Latino population in America has led to party leadership at least expressing interest in immigrant communities as a source of votes. Following the Republican’s failure to regain the White House in 2012, a three-month long listening tour resulted in the identification of 219 prescriptions for success in the 2016 elections in a report called the *Growth and Opportunity Project*. Recommendations included campaigning among Hispanic, black,
Asian, and gay Americans in order to “demonstrate we care about them, too” (p. 7). The report also recommended that the GOP recruit more candidates who come from minority communities and noted, “If Hispanic Americans perceive that a GOP nominee or candidate does not want them in the United States (i.e. self-deportation), they will not pay attention to our next sentence. It does not matter what we say about education, jobs or the economy; if Hispanics think we do not want them here, they will close their ears to our policies” (Growth and Opportunity Project, 2013:8). Interestingly, the 2016 GOP Presidential Candidate, Donald Trump, appears to be relying on a strategy in complete opposition to the inclusive language recommended by this report.

On the Democratic side of the aisle, several liberal donors have launched a $15 million campaign to mobilize immigrants in the 2016 election, which is their largest voter-turnout effort ever devoted exclusively to Latino and immigrant voters (Confessore and Preston 2016). While this investment will certainly mean the political mobilization of more immigrants in traditional gateway cities, a $15 million investment with the goal of 400,000 new Democratic voters in the November 2016 election is still relatively small, so it is unlikely that the immigrant mobilization campaigns will spread to new gateway cities.

Overall, while political parties still play a vital role in politically incorporating new immigrant in traditional gateway cities, it still remains to be seen how significant of a role political parties will have in politically including the newest waves of immigrants. Additionally, there is likely significant heterogeneity across cities in how well political parties include immigrants based on factors like the strength of the local party machine, the significance of the region or state to national political plans, and the local perception of immigrants.
For immigrants, and many other blue collar workers, unions in traditional gateways have also historically served as a key institution in political socialization. Research shows that a key reason people participate in politics is because organizations mobilize or inspire them to act. That is, political action stems from interaction between individuals and organizations, parties, or interest groups, not from individual attributes alone (Kerrissey and Schofer, 2013). Therefore, the organizational structure of unions, coupled with the fact that American labor unions gain power by developing the civic skills, political identities, and collective action capacities of their members, leads to union efforts to galvanize members to participate in certain forms of politics. (Kerrissey and Schofer, 2013). Thus, unions help to politically incorporate their membership through participation in phone banks, holding political signs in public places, and encouraging voter turnout.

This phenomenon of greater political participation of union members compared to non-union members is known as the “union effect”, though the strength of the effect varies on several characteristics. For instance, the unionization/voter turnout link is stronger in counties with lower median incomes, higher income inequality, and lower levels of education (Zullo, 2008). However, the union effect on voter turnout is reduced in states with right-to-work laws or in the absence of collective bargaining rights for public employees (Zullo, 2008). Additionally, while there is a “union effect” on voter turnout for both public- and private-sector union members, the degree of the effect is very different. For example, Rosenfeld (2010) found that, all else being equal, the predicted probability of voting among private sector union members was 62 percent, compared with 56 percent among their non-union counterparts. However, amongst public employees, Rosenfeld (2010) found the probability of voting was about 64 percent for non-union...
public employees compared to 66 percent for their unionized peers; while statistically significant, the effect was about half the size of the union effect in the private sector.

Unions can also have an impact on voter turnout outside their general membership; household voter turnout is higher in households with a union member than those without (Zullo, 2008) and all types of union contacts (including personal visits and live phone calls) significantly affect the turnout levels of voters, particularly Latinos (Lamare, 2010). While the history of unions in traditional gateway cities is complicated, particularly in regards to inclusion of immigrants and minorities, the way in which unions politically mobilize their members is undisputed. And, as immigrants became political as workers, they also became political as ethnics and members of religious communities in these traditional gateway cities (Sterne, 2001; Wong, 2006).

While historically an important force for the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateway cities, the impact of unions in political mobilization might be declining as union membership declines. For 2015, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the percent of wage and salary workers who were members of unions was 11.1 percent, which accounts for approximately 14.8 million workers. In 1983, the first year for which comparable union data are available, the union membership rate was 20.1 percent, and there were 17.7 million union workers. Additionally, following a long-term trend, the 2015 unionization rates among the foreign born (8.9 percent) remains less than that of U.S.-born workers (11.5 percent) (Bucknor, 2016).

So while unions certainly still play a role in the political mobilization of immigrants in traditional gateways, there has been a significant decline in unionization rates over the past
several decades, weakening the extent to which they are a significant influence in the political mobilization of new immigrants in traditional gateways.

*Public Agencies*

In addition to political parties and unions, local governments in traditional gateways have helped to incorporate immigrants in politics through the establishment of public agencies to aid immigrants through the process of naturalization. The presence of these public agencies has helped to give their foreign born constituents the status elected officials care most about: voter. It is also not uncommon for traditional gateways to have Human Relations Commissions or a similar group tasked with dealing with equity issues among groups with varying demographics.

Some traditional gateways even have a specific institution whose primary mission is integrating immigrants. For example, San Francisco has an Immigrant Rights Commission whose purpose is to enhance the quality of life of immigrants through political incorporation and improving access to social services (Gerstle and Mollenkopf, 2001; Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005). At its creation in 1997, San Francisco’s commission served in only an advisory role. However, in 2001 it was given additional oversight authority, like making sure city departments are in compliance with the translation services ordinance and the collection of complaints from immigrant residents regarding city services. Due partly to the success of its Immigrant Rights Commission, San Francisco has been used as a model city for public-private partnerships with immigrant groups, particularly in securing socio-economic and political inclusion for its immigrant communities (de Graauw, 2008).

*Ethnic and Civic Organizations*

A final key resource that has a long history of aiding the political inclusion of immigrants in traditional gateway cities is the dense presence of ethnic and civic organizations located in
ethnic communities. Historically, the promotion of naturalization by mutual aid societies, church
groups, and women’s organizations has been crucial in making voters out of immigrants and in
helping them politically adapt to the United States system of governance. Additionally, cities
that have a history of continuous migration tend to build norms of inclusion and civic capacity
for public-private partnerships that has not been observed in new destinations (Gerstle and

The strength of these organizations in politically organizing immigrants can be seen in
the May 1, 2006 protests where millions of immigrants gathered in more than 100 large cities in
the United States to urge Congress to defeat legislation that would stiffen criminal penalties
against undocumented immigrants and create new restrictions on immigrants seeking U.S.
citizenship (Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, and Theodore, 2008). While many
assumed these demonstrations were a spontaneous outburst of frustration and anger over punitive
immigration policies, Cordero- Guzmán, et al. (2008) found these well organized protests were
born out of long-standing cooperative efforts and well-established institutional networks of
immigrant-serving community-based organizations, social service providers, and advocacy
groups. So when the occasion rose for political action, these organizations were able to draw on
preexisting organizational networks and relationships to fashion a forceful, public response that
stunned even the National Council of la Raza, a national-level advocacy group for Latinos
(Cordero- Guzmán, et al., 2008).

According to Cordero-Guzmán, et al. (2008) the ability to achieve the unprecedented
scale of the protests seen in 2006 was predicated on the credibility local organizations built
through earlier service, organizing, and advocacy efforts. Because of this credibility, these local
organizations were trusted in their framing of the challenges facing immigrants and were able to
mobilize their constituencies. Cordero- Guzmán, et al. (2008) also found that it is through the activities of local nonprofit organizations that many immigrants learn about policies that may affect their well-being as well as what they can do individually and collectively to participate in civic and political activities. Furthermore, local coalitions of nonprofit organizations have amplified immigrants’ political voice and allowed them to collectively and powerfully express their demands in the time honored tradition of civic engagement, street-level political activism, and peaceful protest.

**Twenty-First Century Traditional Gateways**

Overall, while traditional gateway cities have seen a decline in some of the resources that have historically assisted in the political incorporation of new immigrants, the norm of politically including immigrants has been established in these cities, unlike in new destinations. So even though political parties have weakened their recruitment of immigrants in a more efficient effort to pursue “likely voters” and unions having fewer members and are becoming increasingly disinterested in neighborhood politics, there remains an expectation that immigrants have a place in politics. Likewise, the ethnic organizations in traditional gateway cities are more likely than in new destinations to have rapport with local government and the community groups in traditional gateways have more experience working with immigrant communities than in new destinations.

**New Gateways and Immigrant Political Incorporation**

With the recent pattern of new immigrants settling directly in suburban areas, small towns, and even rural areas all across the United States (Fortuny, Chaudry, & Jargowsky, 2010; Marrow, 2011; Singer, Hardwick, and Bretell, 2008), research on non-traditional gateways began emerging in the mid-1990s with the focus primarily on the economic and cultural integration of
immigrants in their new communities. The research on the political incorporation of immigrants in non-traditional gateway cities is rather limited in comparison. This political angle is a salient area for research because while many immigrants living in these new gateway communities have not yet naturalized or received much attention from local political parties and campaigns, in the coming decades, many of these immigrants will become citizens, vote in local and national elections, and transform the political dynamics of their communities (Goldsmith and Holzner, 2015).

Recent sociological research is demonstrating how city-level political environments can influence the distribution of social problems across neighborhoods, with a particular focus on immigrant neighborhoods in emerging destinations (Lyons, Vélez, and Santoroa, 2013; Painter-Davis, 2016). This relatively new approach to understanding neighborhood-level problems is based on the notion that the political mobilization of neighborhoods marginalized across class, race, ethnicity, and nativity partly depends on the receptivity of local political actors and structures to their needs. This research has found that cities that are politically receptive to immigrants can engender trust in the political system and thus encourage residents of marginalized neighborhoods to become civically engaged, develop a sense of attachment to and ownership of their neighborhoods, and mobilize on behalf of neighborhood concerns (Lyons, et al, 2013).

As part of this research into the ways city-level political environments shape the immigration-violence relationship, Lyons, et al. (2013) created a concept they call “immigrant political opportunities” which is a measure for the political receptivity of cities in meeting the needs of the immigrant communities. In this research, a city is considered to have favorable immigrant opportunities when supportive politicians are in office, the broader community is
receptive to immigrant issues, cities adopt pro-immigrant legislation, minorities are bureaucratically incorporated into police departments, and the form of government grants immigrants and their allies institutional access to and influence in municipal decision making (Lyons, et al, 2013). In a study of 8,931 census tracts in 87 cities, Lyons, et al (2013) found an inverse relationship between immigrant neighborhood concentration and neighborhood homicide and robbery and favorable immigrant political opportunities enhanced the protective association between neighborhood immigrant concentration and violence. These researchers theorize that favorable immigrant political opportunities reinforce social organization within immigrant neighborhoods by enhancing the trust immigrants place in civic processes and immigrants’ capacity to exert public social control. That is, political opportunities can reduce immigrants’ marginalization and social isolation and instead encourage their participation in civic life and collective organization around common goals, including safer neighborhoods.

Furthering this research, in an analysis of 592 census places, Painter-Davis (2016) found that the relationship between immigrant neighborhood concentration and neighborhood violence is contextualized by destination type; immigration has violence-reducing effects on Latinos and blacks in traditional gateway cities but neutral or violence-increasing effects in emergent destinations. While Painter-Davis’ (2016) investigation does not include a measure of immigrant political opportunities, making it impossible to explicitly link the political climate with the observed difference, he theorizes that the observed differences between new and traditional gateways in whether a concentration of immigrants reduced violence in a neighborhood might be explained by the fact that traditional gateway cities have more favorable contexts of immigrant reception, including stronger ethnic communities, better institutional resources, and pro-
immigrant public sentiment while non-traditional gateway cities tend to have less favorable contexts of reception of new immigrants.

While the above research provides context for the importance of the political inclusion of new immigrants in non-traditional gateway cities, in what ways is this political inclusion occurring? As noted in the research questions, this dissertation investigates three levels by which the institutional political inclusion of immigrants can be assessed: elected officials, street-level bureaucrats, and the distribution of resources. Existing literature that addresses each of these areas is presented below.

*Elected Officials*

Elected officials are the formal face of local government. The responsiveness of local officials to the needs of their constituents can have reverberating effects on the political inclusion of new immigrants. While many new immigrants are not yet voters, it is still the responsibility of an elected official to represent his or her constituents. However, sociological research generally shows ambivalence by elected officials to the needs of local immigrant communities.

In a 2005 report by the Public Policy Institute of California, 299 cities in California where the foreign born residents comprised at least 15 percent of the population were analyzed to identify the ways local governments are reacting to changes in their constituencies due to recent immigration. This report found that communication between immigrants and elected officials is limited (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005), the perceived influence of immigrants on local politics is low (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005), and that less than half of the elected officials who participated in the survey were even able to name a single organization they might rely on if they wished to reach out to or communicate with the immigrant community (Ramakrisnan and Lewis, 2005).
Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) found that the degree to which elected officials create a welcoming political environment for immigrants was related to the size of the city and personal characteristics of elected officials (e.g. race and gender) (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005). Additionally, the ideology of elected officials seemed to greatly impact the amount of assistance provided to immigrants, with conservative council majorities less likely to provide assistance and less likely to seek out the needs of the immigrant community.

An intentional way that elected officials can recognize their immigrant communities and provide them with some political influence is through appointments to city boards and commissions. Such appointments were found to allow immigrants more influence in local affairs (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005). However, the political empowerment of immigrants through this avenue is underutilized and certainly never reaches diversity commensurate with the population diversity (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005).

While the formation of commissions to deal with issues relating to new immigrants is a common practice that has been demonstrated improve the social and political incorporation of new immigrants, in their study of 299 new destination cities in California, Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) found that seventy-five percent of the cities surveyed failed to establish such a commission.

**Street-Level Bureaucrats**

While elected officials might be the formal face of local government, in everyday life, most city residents, native or foreign-born, are much more likely to encounter a city employee, a street-level bureaucrat, if you will, than an elected official. Street-level bureaucrats include city hall employees, teachers, police officers, and other professionals who interact directly with citizens on behalf of the city (Lipsky, 1980). It is also these street-level bureaucrats – who can
establish a city as welcoming or unwelcoming to immigrants and reflect the inclusiveness of the political environment (Williams, 2015). Also, while elected officials might create policies or establish patterns of communication that might create positive political opportunities for immigrants, it is the local, street-level bureaucrats who have the power to interpret policy and effectively determines the distribution and character of governmental benefits and sanctions (Lipsky 1980) and makes normative judgments about clients, affecting what services are provided or withheld (Williams, unpublished).

Ways in which a city might be welcoming to new immigrants is through the translation of documents or the availability of interpreters for constituents conducting business at City Hall. While perhaps an obvious way to create a positive political environment, local governments in new gateway cities generally fail to provide interpretation for services offered at City Hall or provide translation of city documents (e.g. council agendas and minutes) (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005). These street-level bureaucrat-new immigrant interactions are important because they shape peoples’ understanding of their place in society (Williams, unpublished).

Although there seems to be little institutional adjustments amongst street-level bureaucrats at city halls to create a more positive political environment for new immigrants, local public education systems and police forces are found to respond more favorably to new immigrant populations than city hall employees or elected officials (Jones-Correa, 2008; Lewis and Ramakrishnan, 2007; Marrow, 2009; Williams, unpublished).

Marrow (2009) and Williams (unpublished) both demonstrate that many of these street-level bureaucrats initiate substantive, positive responses towards immigrants prior to elected officials’ action, suggesting that bureaucratic professional norms and missions may influence positive and inclusive responses to immigrants in spite of elected officials’ actions or even
preferences. Professional norms that govern educators and police officers that advocate for equal service to the public are powerful and may push public agencies, like public school systems and police forces, to adopt welcoming policies toward immigrants. While it may be true that professional norms might favor inclusive actions, an additional explanation for the more inclusive institutional changes observed in public school systems and police forces is a federal legal mandate for government service to be made available to all residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, nativity, or legal status (Marrow 2009).

**Distribution of Resources**

From previous research, we can see that in new destinations, immigrants, particularly as represented by ethnic organizations, are rarely seen as stakeholders in local politics (Ramakrishnan and Lewis, 2005; de Graauw, et al, 2013), most mainstream civic organizations, many of whom receive local funding, lack outreach to immigrant communities (Ramakrishnan and Viramontes, 2006; de Graauw, et al, 2013), and non-traditional gateways often resort to “suburban free riding” as its plan for supplying immigrants with resources (de Graauw, et al, 2013).

In a survey of elected officials in 97 cities in California where at least 15 percent of the population is foreign-born, Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) found that only seven percent of elected officials ranked ethnic organizations as highly influential in city politics. Interestingly, the percentage of immigrants in the local population was not systematically related to the perceived influence of immigrant and ethnic organizations at the citywide level. However, there was a positive association between the percent of recent immigrants and the perceived power of such organizations, suggesting that elected officials seek out immigrant advocates to help the local government manage the challenges of rapid demographic change and not simply to
consolidate electoral power. Additionally, larger cities, cities with higher proportions of Latinos, and cities with higher rates of registered democrats are more likely to have elected officials perceive ethnic organizations as influential in local politics.

Through case studies of two California cities and ten focus groups, Ramakrishnan and Viramontes (2006) analyzed barriers immigrants face to participation in local civic organizations, the prevalence of mainstream civic organizations and ethnic organizations at the local level, and the social and political implications of resource disparities between mainstream and ethnic organizations. They found that mainstream organizations and ethnic organizations differ in both organizational resources and institutional histories, which produce and reproduce inequalities in the extent to which they are seen as visible and influential in local affairs. Elected officials are much more likely to perceive mainstream organizations as much more prominent than ethnic organizations. While this would not be an issue if mainstream organizations successfully incorporated immigrants into their membership and leadership, Ramakrishnan and Viramontes (2006) found that mainstream organizations lacked meaningful outreach to immigrant residents.

In an analysis of four immigrant gateways in California’s Bay Area, de Graauw, Gleeson, and Bloemraad (2013) found that the distribution of local resources to immigrants was related to the proximity of the new gateway to a more established immigrant destination (in this case, San Francisco). Coining the term “suburban free riding,” they found that many new destinations free ride on the funding that nearby cities provide to immigrant organizations and the services those groups deliver. One of the primary reasons for this is that government officials in these new destinations employ various narrative strategies to place immigrants outside of the socially
constructed target population they wish to serve. While often welcoming diversity, the allocation of resources to include the new immigrant communities is minimal.

Finally, as we know from literature on the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateways, the role community organizations play in the political mobilization and socialization of immigrant communities is significant. Unfortunately, new destinations are lacking in the density and sophistication of ethnic organizations that exist in traditional gateways. Additionally, established community organizations have little experience reaching out to immigrant communities and fail to align their goals with the needs of local immigrants. Because of this, the needs of the immigrant communities are rarely proactively made known or considered in new destinations, and the organizations that receive the most local resources tend to be overlooked (Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad, 2008; de Graauw, Gleeson, and Bloemraad, 2013).

**Immigrant Assimilation**

Although this dissertation is an institutional-level analysis of immigrant political incorporation, immigrant assimilation research, which focuses on individual-level variables, informs my dissertation by providing a basic understanding of the factors that influence political engagement amongst the foreign born. These individual-level factors for political incorporation are particularly useful for providing context for the different ways in which immigrant groups in the case study cities are being included in local politics.

For instance, from this literature we know that immigrants are less likely than those born in the U.S. to be civically or politically engaged, particularly in activities that require time or money. One reason posited for this political disengagement among immigrants is the failure of
political and community organizations to reach out to immigrant populations and ethnic communities (DeSipio 2011). If this is an existing problem in urban areas with more immigrant resources, it is likely that community and political organizations in new destinations, like Lowell and Brockton, have even less experience reaching out to immigrant populations, despite this being critical to their inclusion.

Additionally, from this literature we know that length of residence in the U.S., age, level of education, and income are connected to naturalization rates. Generally, those who naturalize have had longer residence in the U.S., are older than eligible immigrants as a whole, have higher levels of education, and have higher incomes. Additionally, those who immigrated with English-proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing or had access to U.S. media prior to immigration are more likely to naturalize. In contrast, those who work primarily in low-status occupations are less likely to naturalize (DeSipio, 2011; Marrow, 2005; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade, 2001; Yang, 1994).

Previous studies also indicate that country of origin is a significant predictor of multiple types of political inclusion. For instance, immigrants from countries where reverse migration would be difficult due to geographic, political, or economic reasons naturalize at higher rates than immigrants from countries like Great Britain, Canada, or Mexico. However, those who are least likely to naturalize are most likely to vote (Bueker, 2005; DeSipio, 2011; and Marrow, 2005). The main immigrant groups in Brockton and Lowell, Cape Verdeans, Haitians, and Cambodians, all come from countries that would be assumed to have lower political participation rates based on these studies.

Interestingly, although immigrants report that voting is one of the most important factors influencing their decision to naturalize, they register and vote at lower rates than native born
citizens. For the 2008 election, 72% of the eligible native born citizens were registered to vote and 64% actually voted. Among naturalized citizens, only 61% were registered to vote and only 54% actually voted (DeSipio, 2011).

Level of social incorporation has also been previously identified as an import factor in political participation. In particular, those less likely to participate in political activities include the unemployed and underemployed, those with low levels of residential stability, and those who are not married. Restrictive voter registration and early voting rules are also associated with lower participation rates among immigrants (Marrow, 2005; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade, 2001).

Finally, immigrant women are less likely to interact with the “formal” participatory process like voting and running for office. However, they are more likely to be involved in community organizing and political action at the local level (Kondo, 2012). Therefore, broadening the concept of political incorporation to include more than just participation in electoral politics is necessary to understand the breadth of political incorporation of immigrants.

**Summary**

To summarize the key points from this review of existing literature, in traditional gateway cities, political parties, unions, the local establishment of public agencies, and ethnic and civic organizations play a key role in the political incorporation of immigrants. However, in new gateway cities many of these same resources for political incorporation are weak or nonexistent.

When investigating the institutional-level incorporation of new immigrants, elected officials are often oblivious to the needs of their new constituents and many city hall departments lack resources, like translation of documents or interpretation services. However, other street-
level bureaucrats, like public school educators and police officers, have experienced significant institutional changes, like the diversification of employees, resulting in a more inclusive service to the public. In regards to whether new destination cities recognize their new constituents through the fair distribution of resources, few cities are found to allocate resources to immigrant organizations or to immigrant issues, often relying on resources of established gateway cities to meet the needs of new immigrants.

In regards to individual-level characteristics that might influence the institutional-level incorporation of new immigrant, naturalized citizens are found to vote at lower rates than native-born citizens, which may make them less relevant to local politicians. Additionally, there are particular characteristics, like length of residence in the U.S., age, level of education, and country of origin that influence naturalization rates amongst immigrants.
CHAPTER THREE
THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT OF
POST-INDUSTRIAL NEW ENGLAND GATEWAY CITIES

Two defining features of New England’s non-traditional gateway cities is that they are all post-industrial cities with a prior history as gateway communities. However, after WWII until the 1980s, each of these communities experienced a significant decline in its foreign born population as well as in its manufacturing sector. With the decline of the manufacturing, these cities experienced significant economic hardships, from which some have yet to recover.

For this dissertation, Lowell and Brockton, the two cities included in this case study, were selected for their similar past and present economic and social characteristics. While these cities are representative of many New Gateway cities in New England, understanding their nuanced manufacturing and immigration history are important for understanding their varying outcomes in incorporating new immigrants into local politics. However, as the differences between these cities are explored, it is important to not lose sight of their similarity at the macro level and the applicability of identified mechanisms for inclusion across a variety of New Gateway cities.

Historical Context

Manufacturing History

In New England non-traditional gateway cities, the centrality of past manufacturing industries to the contemporary identity of the cites cannot be understated. For the two cities in this case study, Brockton’s shoe and Lowell’s textile industries are what made them economic powerhouses through the early twentieth century. During much of the nineteenth century, Lowell was the largest manufacturer of textiles in the United States and Brockton was America’s largest producer of shoes during the Civil War. Understanding the vast manufacturing history of
New England’s non-traditional gateway cities is critical to understanding the current economic situation and mindset of these cities in the twenty-first century, which undoubtedly effects the political inclusion of new immigrants.

*Lowell’s Textile Industry*

The city of Lowell has a special place in American industrial history as the first large, planned, industrial city in America (Parrott 1984). In 1814, a group of Boston investors introduced the first integrated cotton textile mill, where each step in the production of cloth, from bale to bolt, took place under one roof with machinery powered by water. In addition to the innovative factory structure, the management also was pioneering with their source of labor, employing the daughters of New England farmers. This was known as the "Waltham Experiment" and its success encouraged investors to explore other sites on which to expand (Miles 1972; Forrant and Strobel 2011; Stowell n.d.).

In 1821, the Boston investors chose an area around the Pawtucket Falls on the Merrimack River, about 20 miles from Boston, to expand their experiment. This site became Lowell, MA. The system of factories and power canals created in Lowell surpassed all other previous engineering schemes in both scale and level of sophistication. In addition to the dam and canal system constructed to power the textile mills, the investors planned and constructed ten large companies consisting of more than fifty mill buildings. The investors also provided schools, churches, libraries, and housing for their workers (Forrant and Strobel 2011; Stowell n.d.).

The first ground was broken in Lowell for factory development in 1822 and the first run of cotton completed in 1823 (Miles 1972). In 1830, the U.S. Census recorded Lowell’s population as 6,474 and one decade later the population had more than tripled to 20,796, earning Lowell the designation as the eighteenth largest city in the U.S. in 1840. Lowell continued to
have population growth through 1920 and was one of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. until 1950, when it dropped off the list.

As previously mentioned, Lowell’s exact location was selected in order to best harness hydropower to fuel the cotton mills. While the textile manufacturing industry in Lowell always faced fierce competition from many nearby New England cities, like Fall River, MA, it was improvements in steam power that proved the fiercest competition. Only a few decades after the establishment of Lowell as a model industrial city, the U.S. began to transition to steam power in the mid-nineteenth century, with steam rising from 5% to 80% of the total power in the US from 1838 to 1860 (Fenichel 1966). While Lowell’s engineers improved the efficiency of its water turbines to over 90% efficiency, by the 1920s, the New England textile industry was facing fierce competition from the South (Stowell n.d.). Lacking the water resources needed to compete with New England factories in the first half of the nineteenth century, the new development of steam-powered factories in the South allowed investors to take advantage of lower labor costs, tax advantages, cheaper transportation costs, and lower rates of unionization (Bluestone & Stevenson 2000).

From 1890 through the dawn of the twentieth century, Lowell’s textile mills employed around 17,000 workers (Bluestone & Stevenson 2000). However, labor strikes in the North were becoming more frequent, making relocation to the South even more appealing for many investors. Beginning in the early twentieth century, many of Lowell’s textile companies ran the mills with no capital improvements until the mills were no longer capable of turning a profit. The first major company to completely divest from the city was the Bigelow Carpet Company in 1916 (Center for Lowell History n.d.).
While WWI briefly stabilized Lowell’s economy, after the war the New England textile industry began to deteriorate and many of Lowell’s textile companies moved south, merged, or closed, creating a severely depressed economy by the 1930s (Center for Lowell History n.d.). In 1930, at the start of the Great Depression, Lowell had a 13 percent unemployment rate across the city but the city’s manufacturing industry had a 17.4 percent unemployment rate. This rate held steady for a decade, with the 1940 U.S. Census recording a 13 percent unemployment rate and an additional 9.2 percent of the workforce working New Deal relief jobs. The 1940 Census also recorded only 11,000 manufacturing jobs in Lowell, with fewer than 3,500 employees working in the textile industry. World War II military contracts again briefly boosted Lowell’s economy and the remaining textile companies dramatically increased employment, but this boom was only temporary and in the 1950s, the founding mills, the Boott Cotton Mills and the Merrimack Manufacturing Company, closed. By the late 1950s, Lowell consisted of millions of square feet of empty brick mill buildings, a slowly decaying central business district, and high unemployment (Center for Lowell History n.d.). In 1960, under the umbrella of urban renewal, the brick mill buildings, boardinghouses, and enormous chimney of the original Merrimack Manufacturing Company were demolished (Center for Lowell History n.d.).

Lowell is often considered the "Cradle of the American Industrial Revolution" (Seymour 2009). Although most of the developments associated with the Industrial Revolution in America have origins elsewhere, Lowell was the place where these developments converged in a way that made them revolutionary. New forms of technology, power generation, finance, labor, and industrial organization were combined on a scale that foreshadowed today's industrialized and urbanized society.
Despite suffering desperate economic conditions into the 1980s, Lowell still maintains its identity as a manufacturing city. In 2010, manufacturing was the second largest industry in Lowell, after healthcare and social assistance, making up 16.6 percent of all occupations. By enticing high technology firms, the factory jobs remaining in Lowell are generally skilled labor. The largest employers in Lowell include Lowell General Hospital, UMass Lowell, Verizon, and Market Basket (City of Lowell 2016).

**Brockton’s Shoe Industry**

In comparison to Lowell, Brockton has a longer history as a settlement, though its manufacturing history is shorter. Originally a part of the town of Bridgewater, the first interior settlement in Plymouth County, MA in 1650, what is now Brockton became North Bridgewater in 1821 and was renamed and incorporated into the city of Brockton in 1881. Prior to its incorporation as a city, Brockton – then North Bridgewater – was already a manufacturing center. Unlike Lowell, which was able to harness hydropower to jumpstart their mills in the early 1820s, Brockton’s slow streams and slight grades meant the city’s development of large-scale industry was reliant on the refinement of steam power (City of Brockton 1998). In the early to mid-nineteenth century, shoe and boot making were cottage industries in Brockton. With the invention of the McKay steam-powered sole-sewing machine in the mid-1850s, the need for any hand sewing of boots and shoes was eliminated, suddenly permitting the mass production of low-cost shoes. This allowed Brockton to transform its disperse industry of shoe and boot making into factory production.

Brockton’s shoe industry emerged at just the right time in history to benefit from wartime manufacturing boosts. During the Civil War Brockton would become the largest shoe
At the time of its incorporation as a city in 1881, the population of Brockton was only 13,608 people. However, within a decade, Brockton’s population more than doubled, recorded as 27,294 in the 1890 U.S. Census. Brockton’s shoe industry reached its peak shoe production in 1905 with approximately 14,000 shoe workers and the production of 14 million shoes valued at $38 million (Boot and Shoe Workers Union 1906; Bluestone & Stevenson 2000). Unlike Lowell’s textile industry, which suffered a relatively fast decline, the deterioration of Brockton’s shoe industry was drawn out. Similar to Lowell, frequent union strikes in the North and the prevalence of cheap labor in the South led to the relocation of many factories in the early twentieth century.

By 1950 only a few shoe factories remained, though supporting industries continued to exist. With the decline of its shoe industry, Brockton’s identity shifted to celebrate its newest success – boxing champions. Rocky Marciano, the 1950s boxing champion who was the inspiration for the Rocky movie series, and Marvelous Marvin Hagler, a famous boxer in the 1980s, gave Brockton a secondary identity as the “City of Champions”. Even today, the annual Brockton Fair features amateur boxing.

In 1995, Brockton’s remaining shoe factory, FootJoy was scheduled to close but was enticed to stay with a package of tax breaks, land grants, and other incentives offered by the city (Crowley 2009). No longer able to prevent the inevitable, FootJoy closed its doors in 2009 after 152 years of continuous production (originally known as the Field & Flint Co. in 1857), marking the official end to Brockton’s shoe industry (Crowley 2009).
While no longer physically present, this shoe manufacturing heritage continues to be a dominant part of Brockton’s contemporary identity. While for many new residents, Brockton’s continual obsession with its history as America’s shoe city might seem more like a specter, from a social and economic perspective, that time in history was the height of Brockton’s (comparable) wealth. The economic success of the shoe factories allowed Brockton to be at the forefront of other progressive actions too. For example, in 1883 Brockton activated the world’s first standardized electric grid using a three-wire underground electrical system. This achievement demonstrated that electricity could be efficiently generated at a central location and safely distributed on a community-wide basis; this system was switched on by Thomas Edison himself. Also, as a city built around the railroad, Brockton became the first city in the country to abolish grade crossings in 1896.

Brockton’s economic woes of the twentieth century are often said to be due to the city’s overreliance on a single industry – shoes (Bluestone and Stevenson, 2000). Brockton has been rebuilding its economy with the healthcare industry; today, 22.6 percent of Brockton’s economy is the healthcare and social assistance sector. Brockton is home to two hospitals, a neighborhood health center, a VA hospital, and numerous small practice medical facilities, so it is unsurprising that more than one in five of its employed civilians work in the healthcare sector. The second largest industry in the city is now retail trade, accounting for 14 percent of all industry. Today’s manufacturing sector in Brockton accounts for only 10.1 percent of its economy. However, unlike the skilled manufacturing jobs developed in Lowell, Brockton’s manufacturing jobs are largely low-paid, unskilled jobs. Table 1.2 provides a summary of how Lowell’s and Brockton’s native and foreign born are employed in various industries, and how it varies by the citizenship status of the foreign born.
Immigration History

While it is true that many of New England’s cities were built by immigrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, major cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, Miami, and Houston have always attracted the plurality of immigrants. Although the first U.S. census was conducted in 1790, the 1850 decennial census was the first census in which data were collected on whether the population was native or foreign born. In 1850, 9.7 percent of the United States were foreign born and 10.7 percent of those in Massachusetts were foreign born (U.S. Census 1999). Unfortunately, available census data on nativity is aggregated at the state level until 1890. However, historical notes tell us that in the 1850s, Lowell’s mill owners began to recruit French-Canadians, who were viewed as more docile and less likely to form labor unions than the Irish, who were the initial mill workers (Forrant and Strobel 2011).

The 1890 Census gives us a good picture of the ethnic makeup of Lowell and Brockton at the peak of their manufacturing success. In 1890, the first census after Brockton was incorporated as a city, 23 percent of the city was foreign born and an additional 22 percent of Brockton residents had a parent who was foreign born. According to historical records, Lowell’s peak for percent foreign born was reached in 1890 when nearly 3 out of 4 Lowell residents were either foreign born or had at least one parent who was foreign born (44.5 percent of Lowell was foreign born and 28.2 percent were second generation immigrants) (U.S. Census Bureau1890b).

According to the 1890 Census, Lowell ranked sixth for percentage of foreign born in any U.S. city having 25,000 inhabitants or more, even besting New York City and Boston. Of those who were foreign born, 40 percent were from Ireland and 40.7 percent were Canadian (of which more than 80 percent of the Canadians were French speaking) (U.S. Census Bureau1890b). It is worth noting that in 1890, only 14.8 percent of the United States’ population were foreign born,
meaning that both Lowell and Brockton did not simply look like just any place in America (U.S. Census Bureau1890a).

When Lowell ranked sixth in the U.S. for percentage of foreign born out of 124 U.S. cities having 25,000 inhabitants or more, it is interesting to note that the only cities that had a greater concentration of foreign born were Fall River, MA (50.72 percent), Lawrence, MA (45.95 percent), Manchester, NH (45.53 percent), Holyoke, MA (47.89 percent), and Duluth, MN (48.99 percent). These numbers clearly demonstrate that New England’s cities have a long history of immigration (U.S. Census Bureau1890a).

However, beginning in the early twentieth century, Brockton’s and Lowell’s heavy concentrations of immigrants was on the decline, much like the manufacturing industries in these cities. In 1940, after experiencing two decades of slight population decline, the foreign born population in Brockton had decreased to 18.5 percent of the population. Of these remaining foreign born residents, the largest ethnic groups as a percentage of all the foreign born were Canadian (20 percent), Italian (15.5 percent), Swedish (13.4 percent), or Irish (11.6 percent).

From 1890 to 1940 Lowell experienced a 57 percent decline in the percent of the population who were foreign born, dropping to just 19.2 percent of the population having been born in another country. Of Lowell’s 1940 immigrants, the largest immigrant groups were still Irish (16.4 percent of the foreign born) and Canadians (38.5 percent, of which more than 70 percent of the Canadians were French speaking), though instead of the 80 percent of the foreign born population they comprised in 1890, they now only comprised 55 percent of all foreign born. The other foreign born were now from a variety of European countries, including Greece, Poland, and Portugal.
Once vibrant immigrant communities, both Lowell’s and Brockton’s appeal to immigrants reached dismal lows by 1980. Brockton’s foreign born now comprised just 7.6 percent of the total population. The density of any particular immigrant groups also splintered, with the largest ethnic group, the Greeks, comprising just 12.5 percent of the foreign born population. The 1980 census data also supplies the ancestry of all residents of the city of Brockton, showing that nearly 1 in 3 Brockton residents indicated they had Irish ancestry; the next largest ancestry group was English, of which 17.1 percent of the population indicated ancestral heritage. The fact that the two ethnicities selected most, Irish and English, are English speaking is a point that will be returned to in a subsequent chapter.

From its peak in 1890 when nearly half the population being foreign born, by 1980 Lowell’s foreign born population had declined to just 9.2 percent of the city’s population. Since the founding of Lowell, the largest immigrant groups had always been the Irish and Canadians (largely French-speaking). By 1980, although many in the population still claimed Irish or French ancestry (30.3 percent and 27.5 percent respectively), these ethnic groups were no longer being replenished with new immigrants. In 1980 the ethnic group with the most foreign born was the Portuguese (28.7 percent of all foreign born).

Overall, Lowell and Brockton followed a fairly similar pattern of immigration from the end of the nineteenth century through 1980. Both cities relied upon immigrants to make their manufacturing of shoes and textiles successful. However, immigrants were always a larger part of Lowell’s community than Brockton’s community, with 3 out of 4 Lowell residents either foreign born or a second generation immigrant in 1890 compared to only 45 percent of Brocktonians had similar foreign connections.
Post-Industrial Immigrants

As the literature on New Gateways cites predict, new, direct immigration was detectable in Lowell and Brockton beginning with the 1990 census, when a much greater number of newcomers to the United States began settling in “non-traditional” states and cities where relatively few migrants have resided since World War II (Ray & Morse 2004). In the Northeast, and New England in particular, these non-traditional gateway cities are often former manufacturing centers that have a long history of immigration. However, in the 1990s, the migrants were no longer predominantly of European origin and they were arriving to economically depressed, post-industrial cities.

The fact that both Lowell and Brockton have long histories of immigration was often cited by a variety of interviewees. Often this statement, “This city has always had immigrants,” was a bit dismissive and would be made after the research topic was described. However, only a few, when remarking that immigration is not new to Lowell or Brockton, noted that the immigrant experience today is qualitatively different; the new immigrants are adding color to cities that were over 90 percent white in 1980.

While many early European immigrants faced terrible discrimination due to their ethnicity, most notably the Irish in Massachusetts, they ultimately possessed the ability to assimilate into white America. As seen in Brockton and Lowell, the new immigrants to these reemerging gateway cities are typically racial minorities, leading to a qualitatively different experience due to systemic racism in America.

In Brockton, the new dominant immigrant groups are Haitians and Cape Verdeans, both of which are black, and in Lowell it is a variety of Southeast Asians, mainly from Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar; more than 50 percent of Lowell’s foreign born are from Asia and
about 90 percent of Southeast Asians in Lowell are believed to be Cambodian (Forrant and Strobel 2011). In both cities part of this case study, the new rise in the foreign born population was detectable beginning in the 1990 U.S. Census. In Lowell, there was a 79 percent increase in the foreign born population from 1980 to 1990. Even more drastic, the Asian population in Lowell in 1980 was counted as 604 individuals – a mere 0.7 percent of the total population. But in 1990, the Asian population had exploded to nearly 11,500 individuals (11.1 percent of the population). Interestingly, Lowell’s population also grew by 11,000 people between 1980 and 1990, indicating the population growth was almost solely due to the arrival of the Cambodian refugees.

Between 1980 and 1990 Brockton’s foreign born population increased by 47 percent, to comprise 11.2 percent of the population. During that decade Brockton experienced a 2.5 percent decline in its total population yet the total number of blacks in the city increased by nearly 6,000 people. As black immigrants arrived – first the Cape Verdeans and then the Haitians – many whites fled the city. Despite Brockton maintaining a similar population size between 1990 and 2010, there are now nearly 32,000 fewer non-Hispanic whites in the population. Lowell also saw a reduction in its non-Hispanic white individuals, losing approximately 23,000 white people between 1990 and 2010, though the degree is smaller than experienced in Brockton.

There are a few explanations for why fewer whites have fled Lowell than Brockton, including the fact that Lowell has a history of hosting significant foreign born populations, but the most salient are that (1) Lowell’s immigrants are predominantly Asian while Brockton’s are black, and (2) many of Lowell’s immigrants end up in the United States as refugees, while Brockton’s are primarily economic migrants. The race of and the reason for migration of
Lowell’s immigrants likely make them easier to welcome, while Brockton’s black immigrants are often met with suspicion.

The experience of today’s immigrants is also qualitatively different from previous waves of European immigrants because the new immigrants are arriving in a post-industrial era; the mills are gone and the cities’ economies are fundamentally different. Previously the factories in small cities served as a force for integration. In fact, social science research has identified participation in unions as a key institution for the political socialization of immigrants in traditional gateway cities (Sterne 2001; Wong 2006). While the history of unions in the early twentieth century is complicated, particularly in regards to inclusion, the way in which unions politically mobilize their members is undisputed. And, as immigrants became political as workers, they also became political as ethnics and members of religious communities in these traditional gateway cities (Sterne 2001; Wong 2006). Many employees in Brockton’s now largest employment sector – healthcare – are unionized through the Service Employees International Union. However, little union mobilization occurs for local elections.

**Demographics**

In order to appreciate the generalizability of this research’s findings to other New England gateway cities, a review of the current social and economic demographics of Lowell and Brockton is in order. These two cities were selected for this study because they epitomize many characteristics common to New England’s gateway cities. In particular, Lowell and Brockton are old industrial cities with similar population sizes – Lowell with a population of 108,491 and Brockton with a population of 94,267. Lowell is located 30 miles northwest of Boston and Brockton is 25 miles south of Boston. While both cities are connected to Boston via commuter
rail, these cities are too far from Boston to rely on its resources to provide services to its new immigrants.

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, both Brockton and Lowell have the exact same percentage of foreign born as a part of the total population at 25.2 percent of the population being foreign born. Additionally, for both Lowell and Brockton, approximately 10 percent of the foreign born entered the United States between 2010 and 2014.

In Lowell 44 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home. Of those who speak a language other than English at home, about half of them speak English less than “very well.” That means that 1 in 5 Lowellians speak English less than very well. In Brockton, 37 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home. Of those who speak a language other than English at home, half speak English less than “very well”.

As previously mentioned, both Lowell and Brockton have experienced a significant reduction in the white population since 1990. In 2000, Brockton’s non-Hispanic white population made up 58 percent of the total population. According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, now non-Hispanic whites comprise only 43.4 percent of the population. Since just 2000 this is a 25 percent decrease in non-Hispanic whites, or about 14,500 fewer non-Hispanic whites. However, the black population jumped from only 23.4 percent of the population in 2000 to 42.1 percent, which is a 79 percent increase in the black population in fifteen years, or over 22,000 more black residents. This increase in the black population is directly related to the influx of Cape Veredian and Haitian immigrants, Brockton’s two largest immigrant groups. Since the population has held steady through these fifteen years, this suggests a significant out-migration of non-Hispanic whites.
In Lowell, the changing racial demographics is most closely linked to dramatic increases in its Asian and Hispanic populations. In 2000, Brockton’s non-Hispanic white population made up 62.5 percent of the total population. According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey Estimates, non-Hispanic whites now comprise just 50 percent of the population. Since 2000 this is a 20 percent decrease in non-Hispanic whites, or about 11,000 fewer non-Hispanic whites. However, since 2000 the Asian population in Lowell has increased to 20.9 percent of the population, which is a 26 percent increase in the Asian population in fifteen years, or over 5,000 more Asian residents. In addition to an increase in Asians, Lowell has also seen significant growth in its Hispanic population, which makes up 18 percent of Lowell’s population; only 8 percent of the city’s residents are black.

An interesting trend in New England gateway cities it that many of the new immigrants are not more poor than the native born residents, despite immigrant status often being associated with poverty nationally (Singer 2004). According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 19.8 percent of Lowell’s native born population is below the poverty threshold while only 17.3 percent of the foreign born population is similarly poor. The statistics look very similar in Brockton, where 18.4 percent of Brockton’s native born population is below the poverty threshold while only 16.6 percent of the foreign born population is similarly poor.

One final interesting connection between these two cities is that both Brockton and Lowell are part of UMass Dartmouth’s and Mass Inc’s Gateway Cities project, a coalition of eleven old industrial cities in Massachusetts that signed a compact in 2008 to unite their administrations in efforts aimed at economic and community development outside of the Greater Boston area. Despite the initial kick-off event attracting a variety of attendees, including the mayors and city managers from these eleven communities, members of the MA legislature, and
the Lieutenant Governor, there seems to be few results attributable to the formation of this coalition. Research on gateway cities is still being conducted by Mass Inc’s Gateway Cities Innovation Institute, an independent research and policy think tank. However, no evidence of any actions taken on behalf of the coalition is available.

Overall, these two cities provide an opportunity to geographically extend the literature on how the growing presence of immigrants in non-traditional gateways are reshaping the policies and routines of city government to New England’s post-industrial cities. Additionally, research in Brockton and Lowell contribute greater ethnic diversity and a wider array of immigrant characteristics to our sociological understanding of the political incorporation of immigrants.

Spatial Dimensions of Incorporation

The way a New Gateway city is spatially organized can play a critical role in the way political incorporation of new immigrants occurs. Three features of space that impact the way immigrants are politically incorporated are (1) the organization of and ethnic segregation of neighborhoods, (2) downtown vitality, and (3) the prevalence of destinations and landmarks.

Neighborhoods

The spatial incorporation of immigrants has long been seen as a proxy for their social incorporation. However, broadly speaking, immigrant residential segregation or integration is maintained via two processes: the extent to which immigrants band together in ethnic neighborhoods and the residential responses of the native-born (Hall 2013). While there is variation in even traditional gateway cities, the formation of ethnic neighborhoods, like a Chinatown or a Little Italy, has long been an accepted norm. In traditional gateway cities, this residential segregation actually helps to concentrate and expand the availability of ethnic goods and services (Hall 2013). However, immigrant residential segregation might not just be a choice
of the new arrivals, but generated by the actions of the native-born. Research has shown that native-born residents have increased odds of neighborhood out-migration when local immigration increases (Crowder et al. 2011) and, in fact, the migratory response to the presence of immigrants is stronger in non-traditional gateway cities. Additionally, in new gateway cities, the neighborhood destinations of native movers have substantially fewer immigrants than the ones they left (Hall 2013). Thus, the dispersion of new immigrants to new destination cities is not leading to greater residential integration than occurs in traditional gateway cities.

Looking at my research’s case study cities, there is significant differences in the residential segregation of the new immigrants. For starters, Lowellians and Brocktonians vary in the level of distinction applied to various parts of their city’s geography. In Lowell, there are eight distinct neighborhoods that are well known and have different meanings attached to each. In Brockton, there are few specifically named and defined neighborhoods and residents tend to use more ambiguous terms, with most people referencing a location through the use of north, south, east, west, or downtown; occasionally, the closest commuter rail stop is used as a landmark. Two reasons for this difference is likely these city’s differences in the level of residential economic and racial segregation within the city and in the prevalence and strength of neighborhood groups.

As seen in Figure 3.1, the majority of Lowell’s Hispanic and Asian immigrants are located in the census tracts that primarily make up the Acre, the Lower Highlands, and Downtown neighborhoods (Lowell Consolidated Plan 2015-2016). In Lowell, entire neighborhoods, like Belvidere and Pawtucketville, have few immigrants. This segregation of immigrants into these few neighborhoods has a long history, with most migrants and refugees first moving to the Acre. The first waves of Irish immigrants settled in the Acre, followed by the
French Canadians, and then was predominantly occupied by the Greeks by the end of nineteenth century (Forrant and Strobel 2011). In fact, one of Lowell’s city councilors described the Acre as Lowell’s Plymouth Rock and sees living in the Acre as a rite of passage for new Lowellians, having lived there herself with her Polish immigrant parents in the 1950s.

In contrast to specific sections of the city being accepted immigrant enclaves as occurs in Lowell, Figure 3.2 shows that Brockton’s immigrants are dispersed through a much larger portion of the city, though the west side of Brockton, as it approaches the Easton town line, has few immigrants and less residential density. This difference in how segregated immigrants are in Lowell in comparison to Brockton is noted here because the way it works as a mechanism for inclusion will resurface in subsequent chapters.

The residential segregation of immigrants is not the only neighborhood feature on which Brockton and Lowell vary; the two case study cities also differ on the prevalence and strength of neighborhood organizations. While the social and economic problems often caused by the residential segregation of immigrants could be an area of concern, one positive feature of Lowell’s strong neighborhood distinctions is the development of numerous neighborhood organizations. In fact, Lowell has a city department specifically charged with serving as a liaison between the eighteen currently active neighborhood groups and the city: The Neighborhood Services Department. Through monthly or quarterly meetings, these neighborhood groups serve as a way for the community to interface with their municipal government, police force, and state elected officials. While, perhaps unsurprisingly, the neighborhood groups that are strongest and most active in Lowell are situated in the neighborhoods with the least racial diversity and fewest immigrants, the mere presence of these groups provide a point of access to local government that does not involve entering city hall.
Since the reason for the strength of Lowell’s neighborhood organizations seems to be the distinctness of its neighborhoods, perhaps it is unsurprising that Brockton, which lacks clear-cut neighborhood boundaries, has only one neighborhood group in the entire city – the Frederick Douglass Neighborhood Association, which was only started in 2014. This neighborhood organization is located in the downtown area and was originally centered around the preservation of a stone marker for a historic site, though has expanded to include a vision to transform the neighborhood near the historic marker into “a place of the arts, of community events, and of sharing the rich tapestry of our cultural threads” (Frederick Douglass Neighborhood Association).

**Downtown Vitality**

With the spatial dimension being a key component to a “welcoming community” (Belkhodja 2009), the downtown area of a city can often tell you a lot about a new gateway city. While Brockton and Lowell appeared similar when looking at census data, a quick visit to each city’s downtown will quickly change that perspective. Brockton has had many false starts at revitalizing its downtown over the last twenty years; many of the buildings still are in need of rehabilitation and the city has largely failed to attract any businesses to the downtown area that give people a reason to visit it. In contrast, Lowell’s downtown is well kept with an amazing amount of restaurants, cafes, small stores, and cobblestone streets. Since the close of the mills and the economic hardship of much of the twentieth century, Lowell has managed to pull off dramatic economic revitalization while Brockton is still grasping at a variety of ideas. The vitality of a New Gateway’s downtown is important because, although economic conditions is not the most prevalent source of threat, native-born residents of an economically healthy city are still more welcoming of newcomers while native-born residents of an economically challenged
city are more likely to be suspicious of its new arrivals (Malhotra, Margalit, Hyunjung Mo 2013; Kessler 2001).

**Destinations and Landmarks**

In addition to a healthy downtown, the ability to “curate place” across the city makes a more welcoming community (Caroma 2014). Good cities are places of many and varied comings and goings so the ability to create a stimulating environment for residents and workers whilst attracting other users to the city can improve the economic and civic well-being of a community (Caroma 2014; Montgomery 1998). In Brockton, other than a mall and a few hospitals, there are only a few places that might be considered destinations. Brockton is home to the Brockton Rox, a minor league baseball team, which has the Shaws Center, an event hall, directly adjacent to it. The city owns both properties, both built in 2002, but uses a non-profit organization (who only works for the city) to manage the properties. However, there is a lot of deferred maintenance at both properties and the city is now questioning the financial viability of the properties. The Fuller Craft Museum and D.W. Field, a city park, do serve as positive destinations, though they draw relatively small crowds from outside the city limits.

In comparison, Lowell is home to significantly more destinations, including the University of Massachusetts – Lowell, a national park, small museums, the Tsongas Convention Center, minor league baseball team the Lowell Spinners, and several parks. The city hosts numerous festivals throughout the year that draw large crowds and the city hosts a yearly marathon that runs along the canals. Lowell has managed to leverage its past for its future success. Having such positive energy in the city as well as a viable economic outlook makes Lowell a place ready to celebrate its diversity and welcome outsiders to the city.
Figure 3.1: Dot-Density Representation of Immigrant Segregation in Lowell, MA by Neighborhood

Figure 3.2: Dot-Density Representation of Immigrant Segregation in Brockton, MA

1 dot = 20 immigrants
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Latin America
- Mexico
- East/SE Asia
- South Asia
- SW Asia/N. Africa
- Europe
- Canada
- Oceania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDUSTRY</th>
<th>LOWELL</th>
<th>BROCKTON</th>
<th>FOREIGN BORN</th>
<th>NATURALIZED</th>
<th>NOT CITIZEN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NATIVE</th>
<th>FOREIGN BORN</th>
<th>NATURALIZED</th>
<th>NOT CITIZEN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NATIVE</th>
<th>FOREIGN BORN</th>
<th>NATURALIZED</th>
<th>NOT CITIZEN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, and management</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
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<td>Educational services, and health care and social assistance</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
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<td>24.8%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
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<td>16.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other services (except public administration)</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
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<td>16.8%</td>
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Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate
In New England’s gateway cities, both the political structure of a city as well as the actions of elected officials work together to affect the political inclusion of immigrants. In particular, the political leanings of a city, the way in which a city’s local government is organized, and the narrative a city has cultivated about its past, present, and future impacts the way in which immigrants are being incorporated into local politics. This political structure and city narrative also impacts the way in which elected officials communicate with and include new immigrants in the political process.

Political Structure

Political Leanings of a City and Immigrant Political Inclusion

Prior research on the political integration of immigrants in traditional gateway cities has found that political parties play an important role in the political mobilization of immigrants (Sterne 2001; Wong 2006). However, since 1982 all elections at the local level are non-partisan in Massachusetts, though not all of New England – Rhode Island and Connecticut both have partisan local elections. Understanding the political leanings of elected officials is still important though because personal characteristics of elected officials, including their political ideology, has been found to impact their sensitivity to the needs of immigrant constituents. Specifically, Ramakrishnan and Lewis’ (2005) study of the political relevance of immigrant communities to local city governments in California found self-described liberals are significantly more likely to utilize more sources of information to understand immigrant issues than conservative elected officials.
In Brockton, many of the elected officials are active members of the Brockton Democratic City Committee and are self-described liberals. In Lowell, the strength of the City Committees, for both the Democratic and Republican parties, seem weak in comparison to Brockton and no direct participation by Lowell’s elected officials could be identified.

However, overall, both cities tend to be liberal. When looking at the voting data for the 2012 presidential election, both Brockton and Lowell had a majority of voters select the democratic candidate Barack Obama (67 percent in Lowell and 74 percent in Brockton). In the 2014 gubernatorial election, only 51 percent of Lowell’s voters selected the Democratic party candidate, Martha Coakley, while 60 percent of Brockton’s voters selected Coakley. In the most recent 2016 presidential primaries, charged with a lot of issues surrounding immigration, 71 percent of Lowell’s and 75 percent of Brockton’s voters selected a Democratic ballot. Of those who selected the Republican ballot in both Lowell and Brockton, approximately 60 percent of the voters selected Donald Trump. However, this is only 17 percent of Lowell voters and 15 percent of Brockton voters.

Although Massachusetts has a non-partisan system for municipal elections, other states in New England are still largely run by powerful party machines. While partisan politics once served as a critical tool for assimilating immigrants into the U.S. political system, nearly three quarters of cities in the United States now have non-partisan elections (National League of Cities). Proponents for the dissolution of party politics in municipal elections argue that political parties are irrelevant to providing local services, that cooperation between elected officials belonging to different parties is more likely when elected officials remain non-partisan, it diminishes the power of narrow interests, and increases the professionalization of local government (National League of Cities; Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014).
So while both Brockton and Lowell are decidedly liberal, the greater strength of the political party machines in Brockton helps to politically mobilize many in the new immigrant communities. Perhaps even more interesting, although Brockton does not have a network of neighborhood organizations similar to Lowell, Brockton does have seven strong Ward Committees as branches of the larger Brockton Democratic City Committee. The delegates that Brockton sends to the State Democratic Convention and the National Democratic Convention are also more reflective of the city’s diversity.

*City Charter*

While it may seem obvious that the way a city’s government is organized will affect many other facets of a city, few people are really aware of the organization of their local government. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 43 on city charters outlines six forms of government acceptable for locales chartered as cities, known as Plan A, B, C, D, E, or F. Each city in Massachusetts must select one of these forms of government and it is written into its city charter (M.G.L. ch.43 §1). The six forms of government can be divided into two main systems: mayor-council and council-manager (Lubell, Feiock, and Ramirez de la Cruz 2009). Within the six forms of government there are then nuances as to whether all members of the council are elected at-large or whether there is some ward representation and whether the mayor is selected by the council or by the voters.

The institutional structure in Brockton follows the Plan B form of government in which the city voters bi-annually elects a mayor and city council, with the councilors being elected partly at large and partly from wards of the city. In this structure, the mayor functions as the executive branch of government, acting as the chief executive officer of the city and chair of the elected seven-member (one from each ward) school committee. The mayor’s responsibilities
include appointing key officials and board members, approving contracts, and overseeing the administration of the city. Brockton has an eleven-member city council that serves as the legislative body, composed of seven ward representatives and four at-large members. The city council is charged with approving funding, adopting city ordinances and zoning, and confirming the mayor’s appointments to boards and commissions. This form of local government is also known as a “strong mayor” system.

In Lowell, a Plan E form of government organization is used. This means that the city government has a council-manager structure. Lowell holds a bi-annual election for nine city councilors who are all elected at-large. The elected councilors then select amongst themselves who will serve as mayor for a two-year term. In this case, the mayor of Lowell functions solely as the official head of the city with minimal added responsibilities. The city council is the legislative arm of government in Lowell and then the city council hires an administrative officer, called the city manager, who functions as the city’s chief executive officer. The city manager appoints community members to boards and commissions, prepares the budget, and oversees contracts and the administration of the city.

In the early to mid-twentieth century, the mayor-council system was the dominant model for municipal governments across the United States and often associated with inefficiency and corruption of party machines (Lubell, et al 2009; Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014). During this era, reformers began to advocate for the replacement of the strong mayor form of government with a system of reformed institutions embodied in the model charter distributed by the non-profit National Municipal League (now known as the National Civic League), who advocates for transparency, effectiveness, and openness in local government. These reforms proposed cities adopt the council-manager system, based on the argument that city governments should be run
by experts rather than politicians. The council-manager system abolished the position of the
mayor as a chief executive in favor of a nonpolitical, professional administrator whose job was to
conduct daily administrative decisions for the city. By the end of the 1960s the majority of cities
had adopted a council-manager form of government (Lubell, et al. 2009; Tausanovitch and
Warshaw 2014).

Through interviews and observation in Lowell and Brockton, it is clear that the form of
government implemented by a city can greatly affect the inclusion of immigrants in the local
political system. Three ways the charter affects the inclusion of immigrants at the local political
level are: (1) the ability to access elected politics, (2) the interest of the elected officials in the
needs of the immigrant community, and (3) the ease at which lasting changes to the functioning
of city hall can be enacted.

**Representation in elected politics.**

A large amount of social science research has been done on how the electoral
arrangements of local governments in the United States affects minority representation. In
particular, following the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, the way in which at-large
elections lead to the underrepresentation of minorities, particularly blacks, in elected positions in
city governments became an area of scrutiny. It was found that at-large systems, as done in
Lowell, make fair minority representation difficult, if not impossible. Due to court challenges or
simply the recommendation of administrators charged with the implementation of the Voting
Rights Act, the 1970s saw many cities drop at-large elections in favor of either ward only
elections or a mixed at-large and ward system, as is the system Brockton. The 1980s social
science research supporting these changes showed a large discrepancy in black representation
between ward and at-large cities, with blacks being represented at about 85% of their population
portion in cities with ward elections but only 42% in cities with only at-large elections (Davidson and Korbel 1981; Welch 1990).

When analyzing the way a city’s charter affects minority and immigrant representation in New Gateway cities, the results are clear for Brockton and Lowell: the at-large electoral system utilized in Lowell makes access to elected office very difficult for minorities in general and immigrants in particular. The past two election cycles have yielded only white elected officials in the city of Lowell, though they have previously had two Cambodians elected to the city council – one for two non-consecutive terms in 1999 and again in 2003 and another Cambodian in 2011, though he was unable to hold onto the seat in the 2013 election and failed in his bid to reclaim it in the most recent 2015 city election. Lowell has also had one Latino councilor, George Ramirez, elected in 2005 after an unsuccessful bid in 2003. However, in that case, there were mixed feelings among the politically active Latinos about his ability represent them, with many pointing out that he had married into one of Lowell’s prominent families and he lived in the Belvidere neighborhood, Lowell’s predominantly white and upscale section of the city (Forrant and Strobel 2011).

In Lowell, the lack of representation cannot be blamed on a lack of viable candidates. In the November 2015 election for city council and school committee, there were five Cambodian and one Nigerian candidates on the ballot, the most minorities in the city’s history. However, not a single non-white candidate won. Even more disturbing, six of the nine city councilors in Lowell reside in the same neighborhood – Belvidere. This neighborhood where power is centralized is not representative of the city as a whole; the blocks where the councilors reside are almost completely white and the median income in their neighborhoods is more than double most parts of the city (city-data.com).
When Councilor Rita Mercier, a born-and-bred Lowellian and Belvidere resident who is one of the city’s most popular politicians, was asked about the impact the Plan E form of government on minority representation, she agreed that it is a concern for many people in the city and she referenced two recent instances where she has discussed it with constituents. She remarked, “I understand where they are coming from. They would like to have representation from their different areas of the city, but our city council is at-large.” She said one man asked her what she thought about changing the charter and she said she responded,

It doesn’t matter what I think, it’s up to the people what they think. Majority rules and that’s fine. I like having the opportunity to be a councilor-at-large. We have the plan E form of government but you can always change things by the will of the people.

In a recent news article where she was asked a similar question, she also stated “I don’t have a problem with the way it is,” while acknowledging that “new immigrants may feel not represented.” (Siefer 2016). So while she acknowledges the concerns, she ultimately does not see herself as part of the solution, placing the need to change the system on others.

The current mayor of Lowell, Ed Kennedy, also a resident of the powerful Belvidere neighborhood, sees the current at-large system as central to the city’s successful use of the Plan E form of government. Because he values the role the city manager plays in the successful administration of the city, he does not want to mess with the current system. Unlike Mercier who recognized the immigrant community’s concerns on representation, though not supporting a change to the system, Kennedy never validated the immigrant community’s concerns regarding lack of racial and neighborhood diversity amongst elected officials. Instead, Kennedy pointed out that the city manager is the one who makes most of the decisions on the distribution of resources, and he has no political motivations to prioritize particular neighborhoods or ethnic
groups. Thus, to Kennedy, the fact that the city council is all white and two-thirds of the councilors live in the same, upper-class neighborhood is not a cause for concern.

In contrast, a long-time member of the city council but one of the few who do not reside in the Belvidere neighborhood, Councilor Rodney Elliott said,

I clearly believe [the at-large system] is an impediment to get a more diverse representation on the council. I still believe it and I will until I’m not in office anymore. I think [a combination at-large and ward-based election system] would provide a better structure for our city.

Elliott served as Lowell’s mayor from 2014-2016 and many interviewees remarked that his time as the figurehead of the city changed him, that he “blossomed” in the role and came to personally see the concerns of the immigrant communities in Lowell, which he said as much as well.

However, his support for a charter amendment predates his time as mayor; in 2009 Councilor Elliott supported a ballot initiative that proposed going to a proportional representation system as is done in Cambridge, MA, where voters rank their choices instead of merely selecting nine councilors. That measure failed 54 percent to 46 percent with only 290 voters voicing an opinion. In February 2016, Councilor Elliott made a surprise motion to consider going to a combination at-large and ward-based election system, saying “Very clearly, there is a lack of representation coming from those particular neighborhoods, and certainly they represent more of our diverse population.” However, Elliott’s motion did not even get seconded (Siefer 2016).

Although few on Lowell’s city council are concerned about the way the city’s form of government leads to the underrepresentation of minorities, there is precedent for the involvement of the Department of Justice in cities with such poor minority access to elected politics. In Massachusetts in particular, in 2002 the city of Lawrence redrew its district lines in response to the Department of Justice’s claims that the boundaries had been rigged against the city’s large
Hispanic community. Since the intervention of the Department of Justice, Lawrence’s city council has become majority Hispanic and the city has had two Hispanic mayors.

In an even more salient example, in 2005 the city of Springfield was sued in federal court over its all at-large electoral system, the same one still in place in Lowell. After years of resisting any changes, to settle the lawsuit the City of Springfield changed its charter to a mixed at-large and ward system that now includes eight ward and five at-large seats. Prior to changing the electoral system, only two of the nine elected officials were minorities. Since making that change the council has become considerably more diverse with now more than half of the council composed of racial and ethnic minorities, making it much more reflective of the overall racial makeup of the city where only 37 percent of the population is comprised of non-Hispanic whites.

While there seems to be discontentment in Lowell about the lack of representation due to the at-large system of election, Lowell’s Cambodian community in particular does not want to rock the boat, and bringing in the federal government would no doubt generate some serious waves in the city. According to a recent news article, Paul Yem, a Cambodian council candidate in the 2015 election, says he was concerned federal action could “tarnish the reputation” of Lowell and that he is “hoping it doesn’t have to come to that” (Siefer 2016).

Another barrier involved in an all at-large system is that it places the financial threshold required to run a serious campaign much higher. One interviewee in Brockton’s Elections Department estimated that the cost to run an at-large campaign is about double what it takes to mount a similar ward-only campaign. So while it might cost as little as $3,000 to $5,000 to run a serious ward race, it costs about $6,000 to $10,000 to run city-wide. Factors that might influence the range is the number of preliminary candidates, name recognition in the city, whether there
are any open seats, and whether they running against an incumbent. In Lowell’s November 2015 municipal election there were eighteen candidates, eight of who were incumbents, running in the general election for the nine at-large seats. It is easy to imagine the cost-burden involved to distinguish oneself in such a crowded field.

While there seems to be sufficient evidence to argue that Lowell’s form of government creates significant barriers for immigrants in particular and minorities in general to achieve representation even minimally reflective of their population proportions, is Brockton faring any better? As previously mentioned, Brockton has a mixed at-large and ward system. Brockton’s first minority, an African American, was only elected to office in 2009. In 2013, two additional minorities were elected to open seats – an African American woman and a Cape Verdean man. Interestingly, in contradiction to all of the research purporting that minorities benefit most from ward elections, all of Brockton’s elected officials who are minorities have won at-large seats. Additionally, while minorities have run at the ward level, they have never won a ward seat. This phenomenon can largely be explained by the fact that Brockton lacks the racial and ethnic residential segregation that is so common in urban areas. Therefore, in order to win election, minority candidates do best when all of the city can vote for them.

The original social science research on the representativeness of local government frequently used a ratio whereby the percentage of each racial group on the council is divided by the percentage of that racial group in the city population; this method yields a figure greater than one if the council representation exceeds the population proportion and less than one if the council representation is less (Welch 1990). When this method is applied to Brockton’s 2015-2017 city council, the ratio for whites yields a ratio of 1.9, meaning that whites are represented 1.9 times more than would be expected based on their population proportion. In comparison,
blacks have a ratio of 0.6, indicating that they are have only 60 percent of the representation that would be expected based on their population proportion.

The ratio of representation for blacks was better in the 2013-2015 council with a value of 0.9, indicating that blacks in Brockton had achieved 90 percent of the representation that would be expected based on their population proportion. However, in the most recent November 2015 election, the first minority elected to the city council, Jass Stewart, did not seek reelection, though he retired as one of the more popular politicians. The other three at-large incumbents – two black and one white – retained their seats in the 2015 election and the open seat was won by a white male who served two terms as Mayor in the early 1990s. So while the racial representativeness of Brockton’s elected officials improved drastically over the last few years, since there are so few elected seats, the loss of even one seat held by a minority can drastically impact the representativeness of the elected body.

**Attentiveness to needs.**

Previous research generally suggests that while city managers may be better than elected mayors at promoting efficiency and economic development in a city (Stein 1990; Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014), cities with an elected mayor are more responsive to the views of their citizens than cities with a council-manager system (Lubell et al. 2009; Tausanovitch and Warshaw 2014). However, Tausanovitch and Warshaw’s (2014) comprehensive study of all U.S. cities and towns with population above 20,000 people found little evidence to suggest that cities with directly elected mayors are more responsive. Council-manager systems, designed to be more professional and less political, appear to be just as responsive to public opinion as their mayoral counterparts. Given the same set of public policy preferences, a city with a mayor looks almost exactly the same as a city with a city manager for most policy outcomes.
In Brockton, since the mayor, an elected official, acts as the overseer of the administration of the city, the functions of city hall tend to be politicized and individual city departments feel changes with every new administration. In contrast, since Lowell’s city manager is appointed by the city council and the elected officials have very little to do with the administration of the city, the city is run like a business that is supposed to be removed from politics, though the city council is still responsible for the hiring of and bi-yearly performance reviews of the city manager. While a variety of factors surely play a role in this as well, the council-manager system in Lowell seems to be both more efficient and more responsive.

Nuances of how communication varies across the two case study cities will be discussed in a subsequent chapter, but conversations with elected officials, immigrant community leaders, and employees at the two City Halls clearly point to a more efficient, and inclusive model being employed in Lowell. The lack of politicization of the functions of city hall under the council-manager system seem to be the source of the general satisfaction in Lowell’s immigrant community concerning access to and attentiveness of local government.

Lasting change in city hall.

Until the past few years, the staff in the various city hall departments in both Lowell and Brockton had been nearly completely white. Over the past few years, change has occurred. The changes occurring in Brockton are due to the current mayor, now in his second term. This mayor is more sensitive to needs of the immigrant communities because they were a critical voting bloc that put him into office. The quickest change to employees at city hall under Brockton’s Plan B form of government is through the hiring of the mayor’s own staff. Brockton’s Mayor Carpenter employs staff at all levels (administration to leadership) who represent the various ethnic communities both racially and linguistically. However, because the mayor-council system in
Brockton is very politicized, the mayor’s ability to quickly hire bilingual employees in the various offices is dependent on the city council approving each new position if there is not already a job requisition open. Since turnover of these municipal government administration jobs is fairly low, Brockton’s mayor has simply had to work with a system of prioritizing minority and bilingual employees as positions open. Despite that limitation, when one department in city hall was asked whether the diversity of the staff is affected by the administration in power, a Cape Verdean employee very quickly answered, “most definitely!” Then, realizing she answered very quickly and forcefully, asked her white male coworker if he agreed. He also corroborated her response and added, “There are a lot more people of color in City Hall now than in past years.” Both agreed that there has been a lot of intentional hiring of bilingual speaking minorities under the Carpenter administration and that he, as a charismatic leader, greatly affected the staff makeup. While employees in many departments felt that the momentum for the increasing diversification of the staff would continue regardless of the administration in power, many admitted priorities could easily change.

In Lowell, since the city manager position is not an elected position, the manager is supposed to run the city as a business, and the current city manager in Lowell, Kevin Murphy, considers access to services even for those with limited English proficiency to be good for business. Since the city manager has more discretion over the city’s funds and administration of the city than Brockton’s mayor, when Lowell’s city manager, hired in 2014, noticed that the Treasurer’s Office was one of the busiest in term of interfacing with the community yet lacked a Southeast Asian employee, he created a new position for that office and hired a Laotian who was multilingual.
So overall, in terms of the ability of the city administrator to create lasting change, Lowell’s council-manager government structure seems better than Brockton’s mayor-council structure because it allows more discretion and flexibility in the hiring of employees that reflect the diversity of the community and also prioritizes efficiency. However, not all of the departments in Lowell’s city hall have a bilingual employee, though, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, the employees in even those departments employ more strategies for meeting the needs of constituents with limited English proficiency than occurs in Brockton. However, even in Lowell, the impetus to make the hiring of bilingual employees a priority was still the result of the goodwill of one person and not even a recommendation of the elected officials. So, overall, the way in which Lowell’s municipal government structure seems to do better than Brockton’s mayor-council system is in the discretion and ease of implementing changes that can be done in the council-manager system; however, such changes still require that city manager to see value in such changes. As Lowell’s city manager mused, “It might actually be the people, not the charter, that matter.”

City Narrative

Often an undefined role of local government is to supply its residents with a community narrative. Who are we? What do we value? Where are we going? This concept was not an initial focus of the research, but became a theme after that exact phrase “narrative” was used in numerous interviews.

In Brockton, a common theme when discussing the vision and narrative of the city was that immigrants are not viewed as an integral part of the city; the new immigrants are not part of the story Brockton tells about who it is. Many felt that the European immigrants of the
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were still seen as the real Brocktonians. As one Cape Verdean respondent remarked,

[The city leaders] need to understand that Brockton is no longer Marciano – Rocky Marciano. I told the City Council, you know, what you’re doing is wrong. You keep talking Marciano. But this is no longer Marciano in this room. Look at the faces of the people I brought [to the city council meeting]. They don’t know him.

In an interview with Fr. Joe Raeke, the head pastor of Brockton’s tri-parish Roman Catholic Church, a religious home for many Haitians, Cape Verdians, and Spanish-speaking residents in the city, I asked about whether immigrants are being included in the vision of the city. He said he has not seen a big push to proactively include immigrants, but he does not feel like there is a plan for much of anything in Brockton. He said,

I don’t think anyone has come up with a real plan. Like, what do we really need to do to make our city work? How many homes need to be rebuilt? How many folks are in foreclosure and what do we need to do with them? How many companies can we bring into the city to build a better tax base? What can we offer new immigrants to the country who don’t really have any skills?

Fr. Raeke then referenced that there are many non-profits fulfilling these tasks in the city of Brockton, but these organizations are overwhelmed and the city should be meeting these needs in partnership with these non-profits. Fr. Raeke also referenced how there seems to be several failed attempts at revenue streams in Brockton, like the Brockton Rox and the Shaws Center. His opinion is that these projects do not end up working because there is not a larger vision or plan for the city. Fr. Raeke posited that one of the reasons for lack of narrative in Brockton is few residents feel a sense of pride in the city. “They call this the City of Champions, but we’re not taking care of our future champions. We’re holding onto a name, we’re holding onto a person – Rocky.”
Even elected officials in Brockton questioned whether the city had a narrative, with City Councilor Paul Studenski remarking that Brockton has no narrative and blamed the lack of a plan on obstructionists who say no to every new idea without having a larger vision.

In addition to not having a narrative that actively incorporates the new immigrants into the vision of Brockton, the fact that some powerful people in the city hold ideas that actively see immigrants as a problem for the city and not a solution to its economic stagnation was mentioned in a few interviews. In an interview with Councilor Jass Stewart, the first minority elected to local office in Brockton, he said,

> When I first ran in 2005 it was a different place than it is now in 2015. But I think initially, [the view] that immigrants were sucking resources without giving back was the general sentiment of city government. I feel like that has started to change and I think the new mayor [Carpenter] has helped to accelerate that change.

However, as was evidenced in other interviews, the view that immigrants simply use resources continues to permeate parts of the system. City Councilor Anne Beauregard, elected in the fall of 2015, said her motivation to run was cemented by a comment made by her predecessor about the reason the city needed to add another kindergarten class. Her predecessor said, “we only need it because those people are going,” which she said was clearly meant to be a derogatory comment towards immigrants. As a child of French-Canadian immigrants and as someone who did not even speak English when she started kindergarten, she decided right then that she would work to unseat that politician. That incumbent ultimately did not run for reelection, despite holding the seat for sixteen years.

Similarly, in an interview with a Brockton school administrator, I asked if any of the school committee members are more supportive of the school district’s bilingual education program than others. My respondent first said that she did not really know since most of them
are new. However, she then diplomatically went on to describe how she felt one school committee member had “moved in his understanding” after working closely with her on a project regarding the bilingual education program. However, the interviewee said, “there is a pervasive belief that English Language Learners drain resources in the district. They do require more resources but they also get funded for those resources. There isn’t always understanding that they get additional [state] funding.”

In contrast, to the view that Brockton has no narrative as espoused by most interviewees, Lowell does have a narrative and a long-term vision. When interviewees were asked about what Lowell does well, almost everyone responded with, “We have the Lowell Plan.” The Lowell Plan is a public-private initiative that began in 1980. Lowell was in an economic crisis from WWI through the 1980s; the downtown was deteriorated and many properties had high vacancy rates or were abandoned. Gittel (1992) describes the Lowell residents of the 1970s as “paralyzed by hopelessness and a preoccupation with the way things always were” (p. 71). The negative frame of reference of even the residents of Lowell prevented them from seeing beyond their immediate situation and there were no plans for the city’s future (Gittell 1992).

The Lowell Plan is a non-profit economic development organization that provides a forum for private and public sector leaders to discuss Lowell’s economic, educational, and cultural development. In the 1980s the Lowell Plan, in conjunction with a pooled capital fund (the Lowell Development Financial Corporation), developed a strategy to use private dollars for public purposes, which ultimately led to the rehabilitation of the downtown. By using private dollars for public purposes, the revitalization plans were able to avoid the bureaucracy of publicly financed development (Gittell 1992).
At this same time, the city developed a plan to use historical preservation as a vehicle for urban economic development by making the Lowell textile mills a national historical park. With the local political, community, and business leaders working together, the city successfully petitioned to have the city designated as a national park and have appropriated $40 million in federal investment to the city. The revitalization of the downtown and the designation and restoration of Lowell’s canals and remaining Botte Cotton Mill buildings as a national historical site led to a significant shift in the mindset of local citizens, where most are now very proud of their heritage and city and confident in its future. Perhaps even more important, it gives outsiders a reason to visit Lowell.

In Lowell, most interviewees believed that the new, predominantly Southeast Asian immigrants as well as those from other parts of the world are a part of the contemporary narrative of the city. Murphy, the city manager, even pointed out that the cover of 2015-2016 city budget says, “One City, One World.” He said he thought it spoke volumes of Lowell’s inclusive narrative when even the most important document in the city is titled in such a way that it recognizes the diversity of the city.

Many interviewees also cited the more than twenty flag raisings done at City Hall throughout the year as a clear sign that immigrants, both from the previous European wave as well as the new arrivals, are part of the identity of the city. Lowell City Councilor Rita Mercier is an attendee at the flag raisings whenever her schedule allows because she loves to see the diversity of the city. Mercier said,

   People like to say that we’re a melting pot, but I don’t like that because in a melting pot everything goes to the bottom and it all blended into one. That’s all well and good, but I prefer to see it as a nice mosaic or tapestry, where each square or fabric is joined together, but you each have your individual qualities.
When Mercier served as Lowell’s mayor from 2002-2004, she said she realized that each flag raising normally only has people from that ethnic group in attendance, that “nobody else knows how happy each group really is.” So in 2002 she organized an Ethnic Unity Parade where Lowell’s ethnic groups paraded through the streets to City Hall, where they put nineteen different flags up in the courtyard. Additional ways in which the city includes and celebrates its new immigrants can be seen by some of the large festivals held in the city, including the Southeast Asian Water Festival, the Lowell Folk Festival, and Khmer New Year. Overall the way in which a meaningful, inclusive narrative can change an immigrant group’s sense of belonging should not be underestimated.

**Elected Officials – A Closer Look**

Brockton’s mayor-council form of management consists of a local election every two years by which a mayor and eleven city councilors are elected. Of the city councilors, four are elected at-large and seven are elected at the ward-level. Through 2018, the makeup of the council consists of nine elected officials who are white and two who are black. Three of the councilors are women. Two of the councilors are foreign born immigrants – one from Cape Verde and one from Lebanon and one councilor is a second-generation immigrant, whose parents were French Canadians. The current mayor is a white male, which has always been the case in Brockton’s history, with the exception of one white female mayor from 2009-2013.

Lowell, with a council-manager system of government, elects nine city councilors in a local election every two years. The elected councilors then select amongst themselves who will serve as the mayor, who, in a council-manager system, is largely just a figurehead of the city. Lowell’s elected officials are all white and only one of the councilors is a woman. None of the
councilors are foreign born, though one of the councilor’s father was born in Poland. The city manager, who is appointed by the city council, is also a white male.

**Availability of Elected Officials to Constituents**

A standard question I asked of elected officials was whether they believe constituents should self-advocate or whether the elected official is actively seeking concerns of their constituents. Most of the elected officials, in both cities, said they expect their constituents to self-advocate, often citing concerns about overwhelming themselves if they were to seek out needs. As one Brockton councilor said, “The problem is, as I’m sure all the councilors would tell you, this is a part-time job and there is a lot that goes on…” Another councilor put it more brashly when discussing why constituents should self-advocate:

“I don’t want to try to put myself into too many things too far. If [a constituent has] a problem, [they] can come to me. I try not to solicit problems. I’ll get too caught up and that’s how you get yourself in trouble… always running after people, reaching out to people and stuff. And you get yourself into a lot of troubles you won’t even be able to maintain… So if they have an issue, they need to come to me.”

Since the general consensus is that elected officials do not actively seek out the needs of their constituents, the ability to access one’s elected official when needed is critical. According to the elected officials interviewed, the primary ways constituents contact them include e-mail, phone calls, and social media. However, many people – both native and foreign born – are generally ignorant as to who their elected representatives are in local government. In this age of modern technology, the place most people look to find their elected officials is probably an internet search or their city’s website.
In both Lowell and Brockton, the names of local elected officials can be found on the cities’ websites. In Lowell, the official photos of each councilor links to their biography and there is also an online contact form on the city councilors’ page. However, from personal experience as well as verified in interviews, this online contact form is a very inefficient way to actually contact a Lowell elected representative even though it seems like the most official avenue. I reached out to all the city councilors in Lowell via this form and only one resulted in a response. When I did secure interviews with other Lowell city councilors through other means, I asked whether they read messages sent to them this way and the general response was that while, theoretically, they can access them, a duplicate of the message is also sent to the city manager’s officer, leading them to generally ignore these messages because they feel that the contact will be handled by someone else.

In the biography section of the Lowell city website, only one city councilor provides a phone number. However, in interviews with Lowell’s elected officials, even those with unlisted phone numbers reported phone calls as their primary form of contact with constituents. When I inquired how the phone numbers of those not listed on the city website are found, the resounding answer was “the phone book.” However, when I checked the local phone book, only two of the nine councilors were actually listed in the white pages of the phone book, leaving me skeptical that this frequently occurs. In my research though, I did find two city councilors with personal websites where they listed their phone number.

On the Brockton website, there are no photos or biographies available about the elected officials, but each councilor’s phone number and a city-provided e-mail address is listed. Like in Lowell, while the e-mail addresses seem official, some of the city councilors never even check this account, with many citing the amount of spam routed through this e-mail address as their
reason for ignoring this account. However, despite complaints of spam, several reported setting up the city-issued e-mail address to forward to their personal e-mail address, which would then better screen out the spam messages. In addition to the city-provided e-mail address, many of the councilors also distribute a personal e-mail address on their business card.

In terms of the phone numbers listed on the city website for each city councilor, all of Brockton’s city councilors are accessible via this avenue and most reported this as being the most efficient way to reach them. Several of the councilors reported using a portion of their city councilor pay to set up a cellphone designated for these calls while others distribute their personal cell phone number or home phone number. In almost all cases, the initial call always goes to voicemail. When scheduling interviews for this research, many of the councilors also gave me their personal cell phone number since it would be a better means for communication.

One interesting finding from these interviews with elected officials is that the era of the personal website for local politicians seems to have come and gone. While 54 percent of the city councilors in Brockton and 44 percent of the city councilors in Lowell have a personal website, the quality of the websites were largely fairly low, with many not even having been updated for the most recent 2015 municipal elections. In general, the purpose of the personal websites was to publicize a political platform, though most of the councilors found them to lack significance to their overall campaign strategy.

The demise of the personal campaign website has been accompanied by a rise in the use of social media. As of 2016, about 90 percent of elected officials in Brockton and in Lowell can be found on Facebook. There are essentially two ways to utilize Facebook as a public official: through a personal account or a public page. With a personal account, a constituent would have to “friend” a politician in order to communicate via Facebook. While it is sometimes possible to
send messages to people via Facebook without being friends, these messages are placed in a different folder, though Facebook might also deem it spam and delete it entirely. With a public page, constituents just have to “like” the page to gain access to the official and be able to send them messages. In other words, the process of contacting officials without fear of breaching a social norm of privacy is much reduced with a public page. In Lowell, half of the city councilors have a public Facebook page while only 25 percent of Brockton city councilors do.

In general, the process of directly reaching out to an elected official in Brockton required less effort and the constituent is more likely to actually reach the elected official. When considered specifically from the perspective of immigrant communities, the sleuthing required to access contact information for an elected official in Lowell is unacceptable. Additionally, when I asked Lowell elected officials about how they communicate with a constituent with limited English proficiency, I was repeatedly told it is not an issue because it has never occurred, despite the fact that 44 percent of the city speaks a language other than English at home.

In contrast, in Brockton, all of the black and/or women councilors had specific examples of when they helped a constituent with limited English proficiency. None of the white male councilors interviewed for this research provided an example. Two of Brockton’s female councilors are fluent in French, which they said they have used on many occasions to speak with Haitian constituents. Unsurprisingly, the Cape Verdean city councilor reported often helping constituents in Cape Verdean Creole or Portuguese. In terms of helping someone who does not speak a language in which you can readily communicate, one of Brockton’s female councilors shared a story of how the very first constituent she helped after her inauguration was someone who called and asked if she could speak Spanish. She said she does not, “but there are other
ways to communicate. You live here and we can talk.” She then organized a face-to-face meeting with the constituent where they had a translator.

Brockton’s first elected minority also reported that during his first years in office, “being that one minority and that familiar face, a face that resembled theirs in many cases… Without any solicitation on my part, outreach on my part, [immigrants] would come to me because of that… because they thought they could trust me.” This example underscores the importance of a diverse city council.

Overall, it is very hard to track down a Lowell city councilor. The most official looking means to contact them – the online contact form – is not regularly reviewed by the person you are trying to reach. It is feasible to believe that this is not that detrimental to constituents since while the elected official is not reviewing the needs of the community, someone in the City Manager’s Office also receives a copy of a constituent comment or request and likely follows up. However, the elected officials, themselves, are not readily available and have little experience interacting with immigrant constituents with limited English proficiency. In Brockton, the city councilors are accessible via telephone, which is clearly listed on the city website, but if a constituent uses the city e-mail addresses listed, a response is unlikely. Brockton’s diverse city councilors are also better equipped at helping immigrant constituents.

In both cities, reaching an elected official through social media is possible but was rarely cited as a way in which constituents first initiate contact. Instead, social media sites like Facebook are used as a way to build or maintain relationships with constituents, not a first point of contact.
Communication

While the accessibility of an elected official is important when a constituent has an immediate need, communication can and should be a two-way street; constituents should be able to relay needs or concerns to their elected officials and the elected officials should have a plan for communicating with the people they represent. However, in both Lowell and Brockton, what one would expect to be a minimum threshold for communication expectations is rarely exceeded.

Most elected officials in Lowell have no articulable methods for communicating with constituents. Lowell’s only woman councilor said she would utilize the neighborhood groups to convey information if needed. In Brockton, there were more ways councilors communicated with their constituents, including ward-level or city-wide meetings and social media.

However, when I asked how constituents were informed of community meetings, most had fairly limited means of communicating these to the public. Announcements via social media, the city website, and newspapers were the general means. A few Brockton councilors keep e-mail databases of supporters and one councilor also retains the phone numbers of all constituents who ever contact her, so she can send out a mass text announcement or call some constituents directly to invite them to the meeting. This same councilor also reported creating yard signs she placed around her ward prior to meetings. Interestingly, even with these more innovative ways of trying to communicate with constituents, on the day of one of her ward meetings I interviewed a religious leader at the largest congregation in her ward, and he was surprised to learn there was a ward meeting that evening and disappointed he had not been informed earlier, because he would have communicated the meeting to his church congregation.

Overall, while community meetings were the most common way Brockton’s elected officials intentionally communicated with their constituents, they were also cited as an inefficient
means for communicating with constituents. As one councilor said, “the same people always come with the same issues that generally aren’t ward issues.” Additionally, meetings co-hosted by at-large councilors would often try to have guest speakers from the local police or fire departments to address concerns related to public safety. However, councilors said that it was hard to justify these since the guest speaker is paid overtime to come to the meeting and so few residents actually attend.

In addition to ward meetings, social media was a common method councilors cited as a means of communicating with their constituents. As previously noted, 90 percent of elected officials in Brockton and in Lowell can be found on Facebook. However, how one leverages their Facebook page can vary significantly. In Brockton, the female elected officials and the black elected officials are more likely to utilize Facebook as a means of communicating with their constituents. In Lowell, where all of the politicians are white and there is only one elected female, unsurprisingly, the younger elected officials were actually those more partial to using Facebook.

The types of news most likely to be shared via social media by city councilors is information about community events, but some of the elected officials also use Facebook to share news articles related to the community and to demonstrate their participation in community events by posting photos of programs or speakers at community events. A couple of Brockton’s ethnic minority councilors also frequently extend invitations to attend weekly city council or finance committee meetings. However, not all elected officials are embracing the internet as a means of communication. As one Brockton city councilor said, “Anyone can write anything on the internet and there is so much misinformation out there. People who want to be involved but
do it the wrong way write anything they want on the internet, and some people are wrong or have their own agenda and totally mislead on purpose.”

In contrast, Brockton’s first elected minority considers Facebook one of the most important means for reaching young, immigrant constituents. He estimated that about 75 percent of his 5,000 Facebook followers are ethnic minorities, many of whom are immigrants, and about half of them are under 25 years old. This city councilor also frequently uses Facebook as a means to communicate his position on city issues and to solicit other’s views.

The Role of Events

Although elected officials are lacking in tools to communicate with their constituents and largely do not actively seek out the needs of constituents, preferring constituents to self-advocate, one critical way positive communication occurs and elected officials are made accessible to constituents is through their attendance of community events. While attendance at public events seems like an ordinary task of an elected official, at the local level, there is vast differences in how frequently one attends them and which types of events are prioritized. As might be expected, in Brockton, the at-large city councilors tended to be more involved in public appearances than ward-level councilors. However, in Lowell, where all of the city councilors are elected at-large, there is still significant variation amongst the councilors in their level of participation at community events.

In Brockton, the women councilors are much more likely to attend community events of all types, including ones hosted by immigrant organizations. Part of this seems to simply be because they have better systems in place to learn about such events, but they also prioritize them over their male counterparts. When I asked about how the councilors hear about the community events, I received an array of answers from the female councilors from flyers sent
home with their kids who are in the Brockton Public Schools and the local newspapers to “liking” community groups on Facebook so they can keep up with the events they host. In contrast, the white male elected officials tended to only go to events they received personal invitations to attend.

In Lowell, the current administrative assistant for the mayor proactively disseminates information about community events to all of the elected officials. As the figurehead of the city, the mayor has some obligation to attend these events when specifically invited, though certain types of events are prioritized dependent on who is mayor. The current mayor is particularly interested in economic development so he is more likely to attend a ribbon cutting for a new business than he is an immigrant group’s flag raising or fundraiser. Lowell holds multiple flag raisings at their city hall each year and it is pretty consistent which two or three elected officials will be present.

In both Brockton and Lowell, the elected officials who frequently attend community events also cite them as a critical source for learning about the needs of the community in general, but particularly their immigrant constituents. Leaders of local immigrant groups also felt that the elected official who attend their events are more likely to support issues that are in touch with the needs of immigrants. Also, while the immigrant groups said they extend invitations to all elected officials, it is always the same select few who actually attend, which, in Brockton and Lowell are the women elected officials as well as the ethnic minority male councilors in Brockton. Through the course of my research I attended several events hosted by the immigrant community groups in Lowell and Brockton, and this assertion was validated.

In election years, the immigrant groups have much higher attendance at their events by the incumbents who are not the expected attendees. In the summer of 2015, one Facebook post
by a Lowell City Councilor running for reelection joked that you could tell it was an election year since multiple (white) candidates were participating as models in the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association’s annual fashion show. Although these immigrant organizations recognize the cynical side of this interest, they still welcome the acknowledgement and participation.

**Age, Race, and Gender**

As noted in the literature review, prior research suggests that personal characteristics of elected officials, like race and gender, influence the sources elected officials use to learn about needs in the immigrant community as well as the degree to which an elected official perceives immigrant advocates to be influential actors in local government. This finding is consistent in my research as well: women and minority elected officials are much more likely to consider immigrant advocates as influential as well as to learn about the needs of their constituents from multiple sources.

In contrast to prior research, all elected officials I interviewed in both Brockton and Lowell could name at least one immigrant organization they could contact if they wished to reach out to their immigrant constituents. An interesting assumption many of the white, male elected officials espoused is that most immigrants cannot vote. However, in Brockton, 52 percent of the foreign born are naturalized citizens. In Lowell, 54 percent of the foreign born are naturalized citizens. In both Lowell and Brockton, of those who are not citizens, 65 percent have arrived in the last fifteen years and may very well naturalize in the coming years (2010-2014 American Community Survey). This first assumption on the eligibility of those in the immigrant community to participate in elected politics may partially explain why few politicians specifically reach out to the immigrant communities.
Elected Officials and Social Theory

In general, contact theory is the most applicable to these case study cities. Elected officials that had increased contact with the different immigrants in their community were much more likely to have positive attitudes towards them. Participation in events hosted by immigrant community groups serve to create better bonds. Additionally, in Lowell, two of the elected officials even paid their own way on a trip to Cambodia led by local Cambodians from Lowell. Visiting the homeland of a significant immigrant group in their city helped them to intimately and powerfully learn about the atrocities of genocide that precipitated the mass influx of refugees to Lowell. The effects of such a trip was seen recently when in March 2016, these two councilors led an effort to vote to decline to meet with Cambodia’s General Hun Manet and reject a gift of a statue of a Khmer king that was due to be given to the city. Prior to the vote, both of these councilors spoke at length about how much they have learned about Cambodian culture and politics and the hardship so many Lowell Cambodians escaped. There were over 300 Cambodians in attendance at this meeting, of which only about a dozen supported this General’s visit to the city. In the end, Lowell’s city council voted 8-0 to decline to meet with the Cambodian General and to reject his gift to the city. The current mayor, who is notably absent from many immigrant community events his predecessors have attended, abstained from the vote.

While contact theory is the most salient explanation, even for the councilors with fewer contacts with the immigrant communities, not a single elected official fully espoused a perspective in line with ethnic competition theory, where the dominant group seeks to maintain and protect their position of status, resources, and culture in terms of identity and values.
To some degree, rational political exchange theory exists in these communities, but not to the extent predicted by these theories. Part of this may be because the designation of resources is done by the mayor in Brockton and the City Manager in Lowell, meaning that most of the elected officials have little influence over this. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER FIVE
STREET-LEVEL BUREAUCRATS AND NEW IMMIGRANT INCLUSION

Although the presence of a diverse elected body or the actual actions of the local elected officials are an important gauge of the ways immigrants are being included in local politics, it is often the street-level bureaucrats that impact the everyday life of local immigrant residents. Very normal tasks for native and foreign born residents of any city, like registering to vote, purchasing a dog license, or filing for a marriage license, involves interaction with an employee of the city – not an elected official. Additionally, police and public school employees also serve as street-level bureaucrats for the city with varying degrees of public interaction. In most cases, a parent of a school-age child will have significantly more interactions with the local public system than with any elected official.

While it may be easy to attribute the actions of individual employees to personal agency, these actions often reflect a larger underlying departmental or professional culture. Previous research on street-level bureaucrats have investigated the way formal rules and procedures actually govern behavior and have found in these professional jobs, rules and procedures are actually weak constraints on street-level bureaucrats since most decisions are made based on their own judgment, complex moral beliefs, and are situational, not rule-bound (Williams unpublished).

Although most departments have guidelines that govern how to interact with constituents or, for police and public educators, even additional professional expectations, when rules and the needs of a constituent conflict, the street-level bureaucrat cannot meet both the individual’s needs and follow law and rules. In these types of circumstances, an individual worker exercises discretion based on a complex set of factors, including the need to manage their time and work
effectively, the expectations of colleagues, professional values, personal convictions and beliefs, and constituent needs (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; Williams unpublished). Additionally, if there are any resource constraints, street-level bureaucrats also tend to make normative judgments about who gets what from the government and they will ration services based on traditional middle class values, such as work and thrift (Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; Wilson unpublished).

However, the interactive role street-level bureaucrats play in their particular departments and organizations is not merely the delivery of services and implementation of policies; they form and enforce the identities of those they serve. Thus, particularly for new immigrants, interaction with street-level bureaucrats are important because they shape peoples’ understanding of their place in the community as the street-level bureaucrat determines the constituent’s identity and responds accordingly (Soss 1999; Wen et al. 2007; Williams unpublished). This is seen in City Hall departments by the way the staff treats new immigrants as well as the willingness of staff to develop creative ways to serve those with limited English proficiency or those who may not understand how to navigate the bureaucracy.

In this chapter, three areas of city government that are administered by street-level bureaucrats are examined: City Hall, the local police force, and the public education system. Specifically, in Brockton and Lowell, these areas of government are analyzed for the ways in which they are adapting their policies and routines in order to recognize and accommodate the increasingly large presence of new immigrants in their cities.

**City Hall**

In both Brockton and Lowell, the local City Hall is located in the downtown area, though a few city departments are dispersed in other areas in the city. The City Hall buildings in both
Lowell and Brockton were built in the early 1890s and feature a Romanesque architectural design; from the outside, both are very welcoming. For this research, I visited offices in both the main City Hall building as well as relevant offices located in other buildings. Departments visited included the Clerk’s Office, Elections Department, the Building Department (known as Development Services in Lowell), the Health Department, the Collector’s Office, and the Mayor’s Office. These particular departments were selected because of their frequent interactions with the public. Interviews with employees as well as observation provided the data for this analysis. For this section, inclusive actions as well as areas that still require additional improvements to the inclusivity are discussed.

**Inclusive Actions**

**Diverse staff.**

When entering a public space like City Hall, the presence of street-level bureaucrats that look like you is important for creating a welcoming place. In Brockton, the Mayor’s Office is, by far, the most inclusive office in City Hall. The diverse staff, who can assist constituents in all of the dominant local languages, reflects the current mayor’s commitment to Brockton’s new immigrant communities. Of the eight staff positions in the Mayor’s officer, five are held by people of color from Brockton’s Cape Verdean and Haitian communities. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, this is the only office in Brockton’s City Hall that can experience a rapid change in staff. In all of the other offices, unless the City Council approves the creation of a new position, diversification of the predominantly white staff is dependent on staff turnover. However, many departments expressed the desire to hire a more ethnically and linguistically diverse staff when staff openings arise.
In addition to the Mayor’s office, in Brockton, the Building Department has recently added two employees, one who speaks Cape Verdean Creole and the other one Spanish. Brockton’s Elections Department has also recently hired a Cape Verdean employee.

Like Brockton, most of Lowell’s city departments failed to reflect the ethnic diversity of the city. However, Lowell’s Development Services department, which provides a one-stop center for land-use, permitting, and code enforcement activities, is staffed with employees that reflect the dominant ethnic groups in the city. Additionally, the Treasurer’s Office, which handles taxes, water bills, and other miscellaneous collections, recently hired a Southeast Asian employee.

When interviewing elected officials, I would ask about whether there is much discussion about diversifying the staff of City Hall, the police force, and public schools. In Brockton, one city councilor responded,

I just know that what’s been represented and told to the council during resolves and during finance committee meetings and during budget hearings. You know it’s been communicated through this current mayor and through previous mayors that they want to try to make the employee makeup of different departments, of fire, of our schools, to really be more of a well-rounded staff population that really shows a true representation of Brockton. This also has the benefit of allowing residents who don’t necessarily speak English as their primary [language] to feel comfortable, because certain people that come from other communities have had a representation or dealings with police in foreign nations that may not have been as pleasant. So you need to realize that it’s a big endeavor to move from one country to a new country and then try to establish. So all I can say, and I can’t speak for any other community, I know Brockton is attempting to do that. And a
lot of it, a lot of the issue comes down to budgeting, which is a terrible thing. But it’s a reality. The more money you have, the more outreach, education, and hiring you can do. And again, as the old saying is, “do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” I know they are doing that.

While this interviewee could clear articulate why it was important to have a diverse group of faces representing the city, he, as one of the more prominent city councilors, felt little ability to influence this change in the city. This was a recurring response amongst all elected officials interviewed in both Lowell and Brockton: it would be nice to diversify the staff, but there is no clear pathway for bringing about change quickly.

Translation services.

A standard question when interviewing street-level bureaucrats in various City Hall departments was how they help constituents with limited English proficiency. In most departments, even those with only white, English-speaking employees, there was a general espoused goal to be helpful. However, neither Brockton or Lowell had any established policies for helping constituents who could not easily conduct their business in English. In each city, it was up to the employees to formulate a response that might accommodate these new immigrants. This lack of institutional policy is concerning because it relies on the goodwill of street-level bureaucrats to affirm the identity of the new immigrants as deserving constituents instead of providing clear rules about an appropriate response.

In Brockton, the diversity of the Mayor’s Office has become an asset for other departments throughout City Hall. While there is no formal requirement to call someone in the Mayor’s Office to aid with translation, all of the street-level bureaucrats interviewed cited this as
a resource they have used. To corroborate the usage of this method, the staff in the Mayor’s Office also cited this as a daily part of their job. However, this is not always the go-to solution for departments with few or no bilingual employees. In fact, the least diverse departments were least likely to cite utilizing the Mayor’s Office as a resource for translation.

The offices that have at least one bilingual employee were quick to cite the bilingual employee as a significant resource. However, the bilingual employees found that their presence made it easier for the English-only street-level bureaucrats to pass off constituents with limited English-proficiency, even if the constituent does not speak the same language as the bilingual employee. As one bilingual employee explained, “[My coworker] frequently forgets what language I speak, so anytime someone who’s a little brown comes in, he summons me.” She said this in a teasing manner, but the coworker confirmed he could never remember her ethnicity and in that moment tried to guess it and failed. This same “forgetful” employee also estimated that 80 percent of the constituents who came into his department’s office had limited English proficiency. Perhaps he is using a different measure of proficiency, but this estimate seems drastically out of proportion with the population as a whole where only 37 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home (American Community Survey 2010-2014). It seems much more likely that he is overestimating the number of constituents he considers to be foreigners.

In Lowell, there was no specific policy or strategy for helping constituents with limited English proficiency if a department’s bilingual employee was not present. A few employees mentioned they would try to reach a bilingual employee in a neighboring office, allow the constituent to use their personal cellphone to call a friend to assist with translation, or recommend that they visit the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association and return with a
translator. In Lowell, the non-profit Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association is a vital resource in helping new immigrants navigate the city’s bureaucracy since the city has largely failed to change its pattern of doing business to be helpful.

In Lowell, some of the employees would develop their own strategies to provide assistance. For example, since none of the employees in Lowell’s Clerk’s Office spoke a language other than English, the employees learned the phrase “are you here for a dog license?” in Khmer and Spanish in order to prove service without the need for a translator. If a constituent with limited English proficiency confirmed that was the reason for their visit, the employees would use their fingers or write down the fee ($10 or $15) to finalize the transaction.

One other facet of translation I inquired about at Lowell and Brockton’s City Halls was the prevalence of translated written materials. In both cities there were limited to no translated official documents. In Lowell, the Development Services department had translated instructions for completing the most frequently used forms.

**Areas for Improved Inclusivity**

Like many bureaucratic institutions, City Halls tend to be slow to change and adjust practices to meet the needs of its customers – city residents. However, some departments reflect greater ingenuity in changing practices to meet the needs of the growing new immigrant populations than others. Some general areas for improved inclusion includes hiring city hall employees that can competently meet the needs of local residents in the dominant local languages. While it is understandable that budget and hiring constraints may limit the ability of each department to do this, each department should be required to follow a City Hall-wide strategy for helping constituents with limited English proficiency.
An easy first step to welcoming new immigrants who require services at City Hall is to provide a directory of the departments in all of the dominant local languages. In both Lowell and Brockton, the only sign translated in City Hall told customers to put away their cell phones. In one interview, an employee in Brockton’s City Hall reported receiving a phone call from another City Hall employee who had found a French speaker with limited English proficiency wandering around the floors. While it is certainly nice that the person who discovered the lost individual took initiative to help by calling a French speaker, this individual was helped through pure luck. The ability to obtain service at one’s City Hall should not be dependent on luck.

Another necessary step local governments in new gateway cities should take is to establish a policy on how to assist constituents with limited English proficiency. If there is not an employee in that specific department that can provide translation, in both Lowell and Brockton, the constituent is dependent on the goodwill and ingenuity of the department’s staff to provide language assistance. While it is understandable that not every department can meet the language needs of even a large population of the city, the fact that no policies are in place to help provide service is baffling. When I questioned employees in departments with limited linguistic diversity about how they help customers with whom they cannot communicate, I was told a range of answers from taking the initiative to call an employee in another office to translate to simply asking the constituent to return with their own translator. Despite the “no cellphones” signs posted in both Lowell’s and Brockton’s city halls, most departments relayed stories of instances where they provided assistance by using a translator that the constituent called to assist with translation. However, this was always used as a last resort means of providing assistance because it is tedious and also compromises the constituent’s confidentiality. Many City Hall employees also reported that those with the most limited English proficiency usually proactively
bring their own translator with them. Interestingly, few employees reported this as being a stressful component of their job and generally reported feeling equipped to meet the needs of all their constituents, even those with limited English proficiency. However, in my interviews with representatives of immigrant community groups or religious institutions, not once did these leaders agree that City Hall departments were adequately equipped to meet the needs of new immigrants in the community.

In addition to oral translation, the written translation of some key documents would also make new gateway cities more inclusive for their new residents with limited English proficiency. For example, an immigrant community leader relayed a story of a new immigrant trying to apply for a permit through the Building Department in Brockton. The man went on a couple of occasions and each time left frustrated because he was told he still did not have the proper documentation. The community leader stressed that while the application itself does not need to be translated, having a translated document listing the required documents to successfully complete an application would help.

In an interview with an immigrant community organization in Brockton, one problem highlighted was the unhelpfulness of some City Hall staff for even those who could speak English, just with an accent. When I relayed this concern to elected officials or other departments, no one was surprised and not a single interviewee felt that the lack of desire to assist new immigrants was a problem of a few bad apples, instead pointing to a pervasive organizational culture that tends to be bureaucratic in general but is also highly resistant to those they consider outsiders.

A state or federal requirement that cities and municipalities provide equal access to local services would also likely go a long way in helping to reduce gaps in service. At the state level,
the federal Executive Order 526 requires state agencies to develop and implement a plan to provide services to persons with Limited English Proficiency in order to ensure meaningful access to the individual departments’ programs, services and activities. The Justice Department has also issued a Policy Guidance to the states advising them that in order to be in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Federal and State agencies have an obligation, when reasonably possible, to reduce language barriers that can preclude meaningful access to important government services by people with limited English proficiency. Such an order would likely be the quickest avenue to inclusivity in the City Halls of new gateway cities.

Police

While city hall employees represent the bureaucratic quagmire of local government that is rarely seen unless sought, the local police force is a much more visible arm of local government. In contrast to the often unwelcoming environment of City Hall and the mediocre attention paid to new immigrants by elected officials in Lowell and Brockton, research shows that local law enforcement officials tend to respond more positively towards immigrants (Ramakrisnan and Lewis 2005; Lewis and Ramakrishnan 2007; Williams unpublished). In particular, Ramakrishnan and Lewis (2005) found local police forces in California were more responsive than City Hall or elected officials to demographic shifts in their communities by finding ways to better communicate with local immigrants in their native language. The police forces also tended to be considerably more ethnically diverse than elected officials and in regards to hiring, considered bilingualism to be a positive factor (Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005).

Depending on where they live in the city or life circumstances, some new immigrants might have more interactions with the local police than with elected officials or City Hall employees. Because of this, understanding the ways local police departments are changing their
patterns and routines in response to these demographic changes is important. It is also critical to understand how formal policies result in individual actions. Prior research demonstrates that the decision-making police do as street-level bureaucrats is particularly normative and contingent, rather than narrowly rule driven and fixed (Oberweis and Musheno 1999; Williams unpublished). From a symbolic interactionist perspective, when police interact with people in the community they serve, they render moral judgments about individuals and the identities they attach to different people influences the actions of the police officer. Thus, individuals bestowed with certain virtues may be treated leniently since their virtues make them deserving while others may be treated more harshly if deemed undeserving (Oberweis and Musheno 1999; Williams unpublished).

When investigating the local police forces in Lowell and Brockton, interviews and observations were focused on how the increasing presence of immigrants are reshaping the policies and routines of these police forces in regards to hiring, diversity, communication strategies, and training. Also investigated was how the larger national discussion on immigration and programs like the federal program Secure Communities affects the police forces’ relationships with local immigrants. While the local police were always identified as a facet for my research, current events regarding police shootings underscore the critical need for quality relationships between local residents and the police force.

While the discretion afforded to street-level bureaucrats in terms of whom and how they serve has already been established, police officers in particular have a great deal of discretion since a lot of their interactions with community members is not conducted in a formal business setting. A prominent explanation for why, with an even less formalized work environment, police, as street-level bureaucrats are found to be more innovative and inclusive to new
immigrants. Even if the general community attitude is unwelcoming to new immigrants, the presence of professional norms seems to govern local police. These norms are often established through professional associations and assert a norm of equal service to the public, which can be powerful and may push local police agencies to adopt welcoming policies toward immigrants (Williams unpublished). Additionally, these professional norms help to influence street-level actions and encourage street-level bureaucrats to resist political interference when it contradicts professional norms (Wilson 1989; Marrow 2009; Williams unpublished).

The way in which professional norms govern the actions of local police was demonstrated in their espoused values of diversity, the assertion that their job is easier when the police force reflects the community they serve, and the range of programs offered that specifically recognizes the diversity of the community.

While the diversity of the police force is an espoused value both from within its ranks as well as by elected officials, assessing the real steps a department is taking to meet this goal is important. In Brockton, there are 183 sworn officers. Of these 183 sworn officers, 28 percent are ethnic minorities, but only 2.5 percent of all supervising officers are people of color (Larocque 2016). In a city that is majority minority, this is obviously a problem. Twenty percent of Brockton’s officers are black in a city that is 42 percent black. In contrast, 72 percent of the officers are white, despite only 43 percent of the city identifying as white. The group closest to equitable representation is Hispanics, who comprise 8 percent of Brockton’s officers and 10 percent of the city population.

In Lowell, the force is even more unrepresentative of its community. According to the 2015 Annual Report released by the Lowell Police Department, of its 239 officers, 49 are officers of color (nearly 21 percent). However, only 11 (less than 5 percent) of these officers are
Asian in a city that is 20 percent Asian. When interviewing one of Lowell’s Asian officers, he said that this was problematic from a diversity standpoint though he also found that when responding to situations involving Asians, the Asian officers would not be bestowed with the same respect as White officers and sometimes an Asian community member would request a White officer. His explanation for this was that because of the lack of Asian officers on the force, they lacked legitimacy in the eyes of the community.

In new gateway communities, the need for a diverse force is not just important from an equity of power perspective, but also because it makes policing easier when you can assist a community member in their dominant language. As one officer interviewed pointed out, “multilingual officers are important because having someone who can speak your language available really calms down a situation.” Also having multilingual dispatchers and other police personnel who are not sworn officers helps to make a community safer and more inclusive.

My interviewees at the Lowell and Brockton police departments also made very clear that the value of understanding the norms of a culture cannot be understated. As one officer stated, “Having a [police] department that is as diverse as its community is a huge benefit. Then when we have cultural questions come up that we don’t know naturally, we can ask the officers we work with.” For instance, in Cape Verdean culture the norm is to first speak to the head male of a household. Also, eye contact is considered disrespectful in this culture when it is a normal part of American body language; in fact, failure to make eye contact might be viewed as suspicious. As another officer articulated, “having diversity in the department and friendships across cultures help us to understand the melting pot of cultures in [this community].”

Another interviewee pointed out that having a fellow officer relay these cultural nuances was more valuable than when it is communicated through a diversity training. In fact, neither
Lowell nor Brockton do specific cultural competency trainings with their officers or even in their police academies. One officer said they found that cultural competency trainings done by people outside the department escalated negative feelings about immigrants. One example given was that officers did not like being told by an “expert” that late night, loud parties might have a cultural origin, but when a fellow officer explains this as a characteristic of their own culture, they are much less dismissive of it. Since “knowing these cultural norms are important to better understanding the situation an officer is stepping into,” and having a fellow officer communicate them is more effective, the diversity of the force is vital to creating a welcoming community for new immigrants.

In terms of official protocol on how to interact with new immigrants, neither Lowell’s nor Brockton’s police departments had any established policies. However, none of my interviewees saw this as a problem, insisting that an officer’s goal is to solve the problem at hand so they will use whatever resources are required to do so. For instance, if an officer encounters a situation with a community member with limited English proficiency, the norm is to request a bilingual officer come to the scene.

In Brockton, the neighborhoods are not ethnically segregated so no particular “beat” is assigned officers in a way that matches their ethnicity to a particular neighborhood. Instead, the shifts are organized in order to make sure they have officers on every shift that represent the dominant local languages. In Lowell, where the neighborhoods are ethnically segmented and community policing is their model, officers are assigned to particular sections of the city based on their ethnicity. The community policing model is fairly new to Lowell but it is receiving positive feedback from both constituents and the police officers. For one of my interviews I met the officer on his time off at a Pho restaurant that is part of his beat. He was very familiar with
the owners and said that even when not on duty he likes to spend time in that part of the
community.

As a way to gauge the general perception of the new immigrants held by the officers I
interviewed, I asked whether there were any particular crimes or code enforcement issues that
were common amongst the new immigrants in the community. All of the officers responded in a
guarded way, as if they did not want to appear prejudiced; this level of self-awareness was not
present in City Hall employees. With some prodding, officers in both communities cited
domestic violence as a problem more prevalent amongst new immigrants. In fact, both Lowell
and Brockton has programs in place to make reporting domestic violence easier and less
stigmatizing for immigrants. In Lowell, a Cambodian community liaison (not a sworn officer)
holds weekly hours at the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, a non-profit in the city, for
the main purpose of being available for the reporting of domestic violence. However, this
Lowell Police employee’s presence at the non-profit agency also serves to build better ties
between new immigrants and the police force in general. In Brockton, one of the city’s
Community Resource Officers holds weekly hours at the Cape Verdean Association
headquarters, also a non-profit agency. The main purpose of her office hours is also to
destigmatize the reporting of domestic violence and to provide new immigrants in the
community with resources offered through the police department.

When asked about other outreach done by the police to the new immigrant communities,
the police in both communities cited their Coffee with a Cop program, where they hold informal,
drop-in community meetings. In both cities translation is available at these events and, in
Brockton, is sometimes wholly conducted in Cape Verdean Creole, depending on the community
members who attend. Lowell also holds quarterly tours of the police department for new
immigrants, which is organized by some non-profits in the city. This allows new immigrants to have positive contact with the police, obtain a personal contact, and to be given a basic primer on U.S. laws they may be unfamiliar with (e.g. what they consider normal family discipline may be child abuse or assault in America).

Brockton also has a community outreach program called Operation Divinity, where every Thursday a social worker, a police officer, and a clergy member go out in teams to the homes of at-risk (for any risk) children. They get the names of children through an open referral system – schools, parents, officers, community members, etc. Clergy then signup to participate and they encourage bilingual clergy to participate. In the past they have found that most people do not want to open the door for law enforcement because the impression is they did something wrong (which they insist should not be the assumption). However, when a clergy member knocks, people open the door. This program was founded in 2008 and its participants are often new immigrants.

Another interest of this research was investigating the way federal immigration laws might affect the relationship between the local police and new immigrant communities. Since the original research showing that police are more responsive to new immigrants than elected officials (Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005; Lewis and Ramakrishnan 2007), there has been significant negative shifts in popular views on immigration and the perceived illegality of many foreigners. In 2008, the federal government launched the “Secure Communities” program and in 2012, Massachusetts was forced to comply. This federal program mobilizes local police departments’ resources to enforce federal immigration laws through instantaneous data sharing. This allows the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency to effectively run immigration checks on any individual booked into a county jail, usually while in pre-trail
custody. Despite this program’s stated goal being to remove the most serious of offenders, mass deportation of low-level offenders, such as people who violate traffic laws and people without criminal histories, has become the norm. In fact, Kohli, Markowitz, and Chavez (2011) found that 93% of Secure Communities arrests analyzed were issued removal orders. Of those ordered deported, nearly half were solely charged with “Present without Admission” – a charge that does not indicate any criminal history.

While the local authorities are not the ones actually enforcing immigration laws, local immigrant communities now often perceive the local police to be a “gateway” to immigration enforcement (Kohli, Markowitz, and Chavez 2011). So although local police departments might diversify at quicker rates and offer more translation services than City Hall (Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005; Lewis and Ramakrishnan 2007), I was curious whether the distrust between local police forces and immigrant communities created by the Secure Communities program might temper the inclusive elements seen in local policing.

In the midst of this research, the federal Secure Communities program was suspended and in July 2015 the program was replaced by Priority Enforcement Program (PEP), which now focuses more on convicted criminals and others who pose a danger to public safety. Even with this change, I still questioned my interviewees about their perspective on the way that this type of federal program might influence their relationships with the new immigrant communities. Interestingly, none of my interviewees were aware of these federal requirements and even emphatically insisted that they have never participated in it. In Brockton, a longtime officer in a supervisory position clearly stated he thought such a program was foolish and counterproductive to the requirements of local police. He insisted, “You would have zero compliance with anyone
here.” Apparently the discretion afforded to police as street-level bureaucrats also extends to their participation in federal programs.

Although the police in both Lowell and Brockton espoused values of diversity and considered the new immigrants an asset to the community, many of these values might be traceable to state or federal requirements. Unlike in City Hall, where no formal laws govern access requirements, equitable service is left to the discretion of the street-level bureaucrats, and poor service is often viewed as the norm, the police could be investigated by the Justice Department for unfair policing. So while I do not doubt my interviewees commitment to equitable service, these norms and values were likely, at least partly, established because of policies for inclusion required by state or federal law.

Also, not everyone in the new immigrant communities felt welcome by the police. In Brockton, leaders of both Haitian and Cape Verdean immigrant religious and community groups felt that their brown skin often made them a target for the police. Additionally, they felt that code enforcement by the city was often conducted in a way that targeted new immigrants while ignoring the violations committed by longer-term, white residents or business owners. In Lowell, the immigrant community leadership was split on this issue: some felt they had a good working relationship with the police and others felt that their ethnic community, particularly their youth, were over policed and undervalued in the community. So while the police talk a good game of inclusion, the outcome might not be as equally implemented as espoused.

**Education**

The local public school system in new destination cities also serves as a primary way that immigrants interface with employees of the city. For the public school system, the administrators and the educators are the street-level bureaucrats. Similar to the responsiveness of
the local police being superior to that of elected officials, local school administrators have been
found to respond more favorably to new immigrants than do politicians (Jones-Correa 2008; Marrow 2009). In both Lowell and Brockton, the school budget makes up about half of the total
city budget. So in terms of financing, this is the area where the cities spend the most money on
their immigrant communities. In Lowell, 25 percent of the students are classified as English
Language Learners (ELLs) while in Brockton, 20 percent of the students are ELLs. In both
cities, the school committees are elected. However, in Brockton, each of the seven wards elects
a representative while in Lowell, each of the six committee members is elected at-large. In both
Lowell and Brockton, the Mayor serves as the chairperson of the school committee; in Brockton, the school superintendent also serves on the committee. The school committees in both cities are
completely white, though one ward committee member in Brockton is an immigrant from
Lebanon. Because Lowell’s school committee members are elected at large, the same lack of
neighborhood diversity seen amongst the city councilors is observed here: four of Lowell’s seven
school committee members are from the wealthy Belvidere neighborhood.

Since school committee members are the budgetary decision makers for the entire school
district, the lack of ethnic and racial diversity also means there is a lack of diverse perspectives at
the table. Although 44 percent of the school committee members in Brockton are female, only
29 percent of Lowell’s school committee is female. When 81 percent of the teachers in both
Brockton and Lowell are female, having males dominate the decision making process is
disheartening, though not surprising.

School Demographics

Like the whole of the city, Lowell and Brockton’s public education system has seen
significant demographic changes in recent years, though in a more pronounced way. As seen
through the prolific data available via the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s school profiles, in 2000, 43.6 percent of Lowell’s students were white but in 2016, this demographic dropped to 29.3 percent of the population. Now, 30 percent of the students are Asian and another 30 percent are Hispanic. Only 7 percent of students are black. In Brockton, where the predominant immigrant groups are black, there has been a 33 percent increase in the black student population since 2000, now accounting for 56 percent of all students.

In addition to changes in racial demographics, the English proficiency of students has also changed over the last 16 years. In the education field, students are classified into two categories: those whose first language is English and students who have a first language other than English. All students whose first language is not English are evaluated on their level of English language proficiency upon entering the public school system. Students who will need additional language support are classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). The goal of most bilingual education programs is to help students achieve English proficiency within two years. When proficiency is achieved, the student is no longer considered an ELL.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s records, in 2000, 48 percent of Lowell’s students had a language other than English as their first language and 15 percent of students were ELLs. This statistic is a bit baffling; I cannot piece together who these students were with a first language other than English yet with significant English proficiency. In 2016, 30 percent of Lowell’s student population had a language other than English as their first language but 25 percent of students were ELLs. So in one and a half decades, Lowell saw a 38 percent decline in the percent of students with a first language other than English but a 62 percent increase in the number of students classified as ELLs.
In Brockton, since 2000, there has been a 47 percent increase in students whose first language is not English, going from 25 percent to 37 percent of the student population in 15 years. The percent of the student body classified as an ELL has grown even more substantially, going from just 7.6 percent of the students in 2000 to 20 percent of the students in 2016.

**Document Analysis: Coordinated Program Reviews**

In addition to interviews with some key individuals from the local school committees and public school administrators about the ways the local public school is an inclusive environment for new immigrants and how procedures have been adjusting with increased students with limited English proficiency, I conducted a content analysis of the publicly available English Learner Education (ELE) in Public Schools component of Lowell’s and Brockton’s most recent Coordinated Program Review (CPR). A CPR is a compliance investigation conducted every six years by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The CPR uses a two-phase review method where the school district conducts a self-evaluation and then the state does an on-site verification phase. The on-site verification phase lasts approximately five days and involves interviews with administrative, teaching, and support staff, surveys of parents of ELL students, a random sample review of student records, and observations of classrooms and other facilities. For the ELE component of the CPR, school districts in Massachusetts are evaluated on eighteen criteria regarding compliance with state and federal laws. A document analysis was also conducted on the required Corrective Action Plans (CAR) written by the districts in response to the criteria in their CPR identified as failing to meet compliance standards. The CPR and CAR provide a clear articulation of how and where Brockton and Lowell are meeting the needs of its ELLs.
For Brockton, the last Coordinated Program Review (CPR) was conducted by the state during the 2015-2016 academic year, with the on-site visit in October 2015. In addition to providing information as to where the city fails to meet state or federal requirements, the CPR also provides a narrative about why the school district is failing to meet requirements. In this 2015/2016 report, of the eighteen criteria investigated, four required corrective action and were classified as “partially implemented”. This compliance rating means that the requirement, in one or several important aspects, is not entirely met. The area where Brockton failed to meet standards were program placement and structure (ELE 5), licensure requirements (ELE 14), equitable facilities (ELE 16), and records of limited English proficiency students (ELE 18). In response to these four areas requiring corrective action, the Brockton’s school district submitted a Correction Action Plan (CAR) to the MA Department of Elementary & Secondary Education for approval and corrective action must be fully implemented by the end of January 2017.

The reason Brockton failed to meet the program placement and structures criterion (ELE 5) was because the district did not offer the same learning opportunities and sufficient ESL instruction to all high school students. During the CPR investigation of school documentation and interviews with staff, it was discovered that some ELL students at the high school level did not receive any ESL instruction regardless of their proficiency level. Also, at the alternative high school, Edison Academy, there were no services offered to approximately eighty-five ELL students enrolled in that program. In order to address this program deficiency, Brockton proposed establishing a steering committee at the Edison Academy to oversee the development of an ESL program, add additional supports for Structured English Immersion in Integrated Setting students at the traditional high school, add additional administrative supports for ESL
teachers working with high performing students, and the addition of more shelter content and native language clarification courses. The district submitted staff lists, student schedules, and agendas from the Edison Academy steering committee meetings as evidence of this plan. This corrective action proposal received approval from the state.

In regard to licensure requirements (ELE 14), the CPR found that thirty-seven of Brockton’s ESL teachers providing ESL instruction did not have appropriate MA ESL teaching licenses or current waivers from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In response to this deficiency, Brockton proposed having Human Resources contact those employees and devise a reasonable contractual timetable to achieve licensure. Additionally, the Brockton school district will offer professional development to assist those teachers in passing the state exam. After teachers achieve licensure, they are still required to satisfy an internship requirement, which will be achieved by providing a mentor teacher and supervisor to these employees. At Edison Academy, ESL teachers already meeting the MA ESL licensure requirements will be hired. This plan was approved by the state and evidence of completion, in the form of evidence of licensure of current ESL teachers must be submitted by January 2017.

In terms of equitable facilities (ELE 16), Brockton received the rating of “partial implementation” during the CPR because at one elementary school, it was observed that the ELL instruction was done in a sectioned off corner of a former gymnasium that is open at the top. This is not a sufficient learning environment since art instruction occurs concurrently in this space, resulting in auditory distraction. Additionally, at a K-8 school, ELL instruction was done in an overcrowded small space, which was deemed not comparable to the facilities offered to the overall student population. To address this identified problem, Brockton proposed the relocation of these classes and submitted floorplan maps of each school to show the relocation plan. This
plan was approved and an onsite verification by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will be conducted.

The final criteria deemed “partially implemented” in Brockton’s CPR was records of limited English proficiency students (ELE 18). During the audit of a sample student records, it was found that several ELL student records did not show parent notification letters, progress reports, or evidence of follow up monitoring. The Brockton school district offered to hold professional development meetings to discuss documentation requirements for ELL student records. This plan received only partial approval from the state and Brockton was ordered to also conduct an administrative review of a representative sample of ELL student records across all grade levels for evidence that all required information is included in the file. Evidence of the staff training was required by June 15, 2016 and results of the administrative review was ordered by the end of September 2016.

Lowell.

While Brockton failed to meet four of the eighteen criteria investigated, during Lowell’s most recent Coordinated Program Review during the 2011-2012 academic year, they failed to meet state standard on eleven of the eighteen evaluated criteria.

The first criteria Lowell failed to meet was initial identification of students requiring ESL assistance (ELE 3). One failure of their system was that the initial assessments were conducted at a central location (the Family Resource Center) but the results of those assessments might not be entered in the district database for long periods of time, resulting in ESL teachers and Principals being unaware of who required ESL services. Additionally, Kindergarten students were found to not be appropriately screened for English language proficiency, as required by law. In response to this failure to meet state requirements, Lowell developed a new registration
procedure that will lead to quicker sharing of ELL screening results and the training of staff on this new procedure. This was approved by the state and scheduled to be fully implemented by March 2014.

Lowell also failed to meet state requirements for its program placement and structure (ELE 5). Students with the most limited English proficiency (levels 1 and 2 as classified by the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment) typically received the hours of ESL instruction required by law. However, those with more developed English capacity but still classified as an ELL were found to receive inconsistent ESL services or none at all. Additionally, many of the district ESL teachers were either unaware or simply not using the ESL curriculum approved by the district. In some cases, ESL teachers were underutilized because they would be assigned to assist a classroom teacher with sheltering content, but would not provide direct ESL instruction, thus failing to meet the full requirement of the law (Chapter 71A). In order to meet state requirements, a full overhaul of Lowell’s ESL program was required. This involved retaining administrators, teachers, and staff on state requirements and reforming the program model.

The Lowell Public Schools also failed to meet state standards on program exit and readiness (ELE 6). Although the district has a re-designation process that meets state standards, in practice, students who achieve some English language proficiency were limited or even denied access to additional ESL services despite still qualifying. The reason for this seems to be insufficient staffing of the ESL program. To correct this problem, the district was required to meet the needs of all limited English Proficient students and to hire additional staff.

Another identified problem with the Lowell program was parental involvement (ELE 7). Although Lowell has well organized events for welcoming new refugees to the district and celebrating them through the school year, there was inconsistent oral and written translation
available from school to school within the district. This results in an unequal ability to participate in a child’s education, compared to the English speaking population. The district proposed hiring three additional part-time parent liaisons who can communicate with parents in Spanish, Khmer, and Portuguese. They also proposed working with community agencies to develop a bank of written and oral translations to be employed for regular communication needs. The Lowell Public Schools were ordered to have this implemented by October 2013.

Lowell also failed to meet state standards for instructional grouping (ELE 9). From the CPR interviews with staff and students, ESL students appeared to be grouped by grade. However, the state could not ascertain any plan to also group by English proficiency levels. To meet state requirements, Lowell proposed regrouping students based on their initial language proficiency assessment level and the process for assigning students to ESL services would be clarified with all school administrators and ESL Lead Teachers. This plan was approved by the state and Lowell was required to submit a copy of the 2013-2014 ESL teacher schedules for all grade levels district wide as well as documentation of the names, grade level, and English proficiency level of students assigned to each block of time for ESL teachers.

The CPR of Lowell also found that parent notification (ELE 10) was deficient. Although the district does send parents a notice upon identification of a student as limited English proficient, the notice is not always translated and annual parent notifications thereafter are not documented in student records. Additionally, if a parent missed a parent-teacher conference for an update on a student’s progress, there was no translated written report that could be sent home. In order to address this problem, Lowell assigned a specific staff member with the responsibility of assuring parents are informed of a student’s initial assessment results, student program/school placement, program model, method of instruction, and the option to waiver or decline the
program placement. Additionally, a bank of written and oral progress reports was scheduled to be translated into the dominant local languages in order to inform parents of a student’s progress. Proof of the development of these translated documents was required as evidence of this change as well as access to student records upon request to verify the existence of these forms.

Equal access to academic programs and services (ELE 11) was another criterion where Lowell was found to be deficient. As noted earlier, Lowell did not have enough ESL teachers to meet the needs of all students deemed to be limited in English proficiency, which would result in students with less immediate needs being without services. This failure to provide ESL services to all students who qualify results in differing access to a quality education based on one’s English proficiency. In order to remedy this inequality, the Lowell Public Schools proposed offering additional training and professional development to its teachers in order to help more achieve ESL certification. As part of this plan, Lowell identified 80 certified teachers who expressed interest in obtaining an ESL certification. This plan was approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

In addition to failing to properly identify and provide an equal education to all students with limited English proficiency, Lowell was also found to lack appropriate follow-up support (ELE 13). Although the district has a process for follow-up support and documentation that meets state standards, most district staff do not use the district form, thus providing no documented evidence that the follow-up process is actually being followed. In the Corrective Action Report, Lowell asserted that the process was being followed and that to remedy their failure to pass this criterion, they would provide professional development training to school administrators and ESL Lead Teachers on student progress monitoring and recordkeeping. This plan received only partial approval from the state, with Lowell also ordered to provide all
relevant staff with specific training on the monitoring of Former English Language Learners, not just administrators and ESL teachers. As evidence of meeting this goal, a sample must be drawn from the records of students who have exited the English language learner program for confirmation of compliance.

In regards to licensure requirements (ELE 14) of ESL teachers, Lowell was found to have many ESL teachers, at all levels, providing direct ESL services without appropriate licensure. Lowell was ordered to have its current ESL teachers licensed immediately, provide evidence of the monitoring of uncertified teachers until licensure is secured, and the termination or reassignment of any teachers that fail to obtain ESL certification by the end of October 2013, which was an approximately eighteen-month time period for a teacher to achieve licensure.

Lowell also failed to meet state requirements for professional development (ELE 15). While Lowell had in place a long-term professional development plan, there was not a coordinated system for identifying teachers that failed to meet or maintain all areas of training. To remedy this, Lowell proposed maintaining a list to be updated annually identifying teachers and administrators due for particular trainings. This plan was approved by the state.

Finally, Lowell was found to have only partially implemented state requirements for maintaining records of limited English proficiency students (ELE 18). In particular, annual parent notification letters were often missing as well as the results of identification and proficiency assessments and follow-up monitoring and ESL monitoring reports. Furthermore, documents in the English language learners folders were not always translated despite district data indicating a request by the parents to translate the documents. The Lowell Public Schools proposed creating a recordkeeping log and a school year checklist for schools to use to make sure that all appropriate records are placed in a student’s file. Additionally, professional development
on recordkeeping procedures would be conducted with school leaders and ESL Lead Teachers. This plan was approved by the state on the condition that copies of the newly developed log and checklist as well as agendas for the professional development trainings be submitted to the state.

**Summary of Document Analysis**

The MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Coordinated Program Reviews as well as the Corrective Action Plans submitted by the school districts provide unique insight into the inclusiveness of a city’s public education system. As documented above, both Lowell and Brockton were not fully compliant with state and federal requirements for equal access to a public education regardless of the English proficiency of the student. However, Brockton’s program had fewer areas for corrective action and the identified problems were much less systemically severe. Meanwhile, Lowell’s program review identified significant problems that were systemic to their ESL program.

The requirements to provide access to all students as well as enable parents to equally participate in their child’s education, regardless of English language ability, is an American value guaranteed by federal law. However, without oversight by a state agency, it is unlikely that this would occur since even with state oversight, significant access problems still remain. Even with the failure to achieve full compliance, it is still encouraging to see school districts have to thoughtfully consider the inclusivity of its newest residents.

**Conclusion**

The large role that street-level bureaucrats play in a new gateway city’s inclusion of new immigrants is undisputable. Additionally, the way in which street-level bureaucrats render service to the constituents of a city shapes and affirms the identities of the new immigrants. In both Lowell and Brockton, street-level bureaucrats providing city services at City Hall have no
formal policies as to what constitutes appropriate service to those with limited English proficiency. While individual departments and employees often take steps to provide equitable service, there is no institutional-level requirement to do so. Additionally, since street-level bureaucrats at City Hall have few professional norms that govern their behavior and accessing services through the city is often expected to be cumbersome for even native English speakers, the lack of initiative to create formal expectations is unsurprising.

In contrast, both police and public educators have professional norms that govern their occupation, particularly in regards to equitable treatment. Many of these norms have been structured over time by state and federal legal requirements. While police departments do not have specific reviews for compliance to state and federal requirements, the Justice Department has authority to investigate them if complaints arise. Additionally, many departments have a department or employee tasked with compliance with local, state, and federal laws. Similarly, the public education system is staffed with people who receive professional training that specifically seeks to instill norms of equitable treatment. The presence of specific state and federal laws regarding the equal treatment of those they serve is also likely a driver of these professional standards. Unlike the local police, school districts are monitored much more closely for compliance to legal requirements and forced to articulate plans for corrective actions if they fail to meet the minimum legal requirement for an equal education.

So overall, even when a city experiences significant and swift demographic changes, the local police and education system is expected to still meet the needs of the residents they serve. In contrast, the street-level bureaucrats that occupy City Hall experience less swift adaptation to even simple accommodations, like written translation. While many of the people who work in those departments do seek to do their job in an equitable manner, the resources provided to them
are limited and formal training or policies are non-existent. While disheartening in many ways, it also provides a clear pathway for improvements to the political inclusion of immigrants in new gateways,
CHAPTER SIX
DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES

Although new gateway communities often verbally espouse values related to the inclusion of immigrants, an analysis of the way in which funding is designated is more demonstrative of real values in action. For example, what types of organizations does the city fund? Do non-profit agencies supported by the city serve a wide-array of city constituents, including new immigrants or are people with limited English proficiency excluded? Do the local police prioritize funding for outreach to immigrant communities? Are the police expanding the budget in order to be able to hire officers of color and with linguistic diversity? Are the public schools applying the additional funds they receive for English Language Learners to these particular students or do they redistribute it amongst the entire school population?

In order to assess the extent to which new immigrants are included in the way resources are distributed in these new gateway cities, Brockton’s and Lowell’s financial distribution of resources are examined in three ways: the city’s use of Community Development Block Grant funds, the police budget, and the public education budget. This analysis of the distribution of resources was done through a document analysis of Community Development Block Grants, police budgets, and public school budgets. Additionally, during interviews with key respondents of departments overseeing the distribution of funding, direct questions were asked about the process of determining the distribution of resources and the inclusivity of programs that are funded.

When interviewing elected officials, a standard question was how the distribution of city financial resources is determined. However, even though the city councils in both Lowell and Brockton are responsible for approving the city budget, the city councilors professed little ability
to actually impact the budget. I found that the ability of city councilors to influence the budget process is linked to the city charter.

In Brockton, the publicly elected Mayor constructs the yearly budget and the city council has the authority to strike items from the budget or reduce funding amounts, but they cannot add to the budget. Obviously, if the city councilors have a good relationship with the mayor, conversations about the city’s funding priorities prior to the budget submission can and should occur; however, this does not often transpire. In Lowell, the appointed City Manager proposes a budget to the city councilors and the councilors work with the City Manager to create a mutually agreeable budget, though the amount of discretionary funds is also limited. Instead, there are expected allocations for things like repaving roads and then the discussion is about which roads the City Manager is prioritizing.

During my interviews with elected officials in Lowell and Brockton, when discussing city priorities as demonstrated through the designation of financial resources, another caveat often offered was that the city budget has little room for discretion because most expenditures are simply yearly line items or, in the case of funding for education, there are required minimums by Massachusetts state law. I was quite surprised by the quickness of elected officials to diminish their role in fiscal decisions. Not a single elected official I interviewed expressed feelings of empowerment in regards to the designation of their city’s financial resources.

City Resources: Community Development Block Grants

While it is true that a city’s budget is significantly constrained by things like public safety, education, and the salaries of city employees, the entire budget is not completely non-discretionary. Following the precedent set in other sociological research (de Graauw, Gleeson, and Bloemraad, 2013), I examined the distribution of Brockton’s and Lowell’s Community
Development Block Grant (CDBG) program funds as a way of measuring the inclusion of the immigrant communities in the financial priorities of the city. The CDBG program is administered by the federal government’s Department of Housing and Urban Development. Founded in 1974, the CDBG program provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs in a flexible manner (Community Development Block Grant Program). Grants are distributed on a formula basis to entitled cities and counties for the purpose of developing viable urban communities through the creation and maintenance of decent housing and by expanding economic opportunities. Per the grant rules, not less than 70 percent of CDBG funds must be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons and each recipient community must include citizen participation in the formulation of the detailed plan that must be constructed yearly specifying the way in which the funds will be distributed. Although HUD emphasizes the need for citizen participation in the plan formulation by persons of low- or moderate-income, particularly residents of predominantly low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, slum or blighted areas, and areas in which the city proposes to use CDBG funds, such participation is rare at best. An analysis and critique of Brockton’s and Lowell’s process for and the actual designation of CDBG program funds is discussed below.

**Brockton**

Over the past five years, Brockton has received a yearly average of $1.3 million in funds from HUD’s Community Development Block Grant program. These funds are administered by the quasi-public Brockton Redevelopment Authority (BRA). As part of the BRA’s contract with the City of Brockton, it acts as the management agent for the city’s housing and community development funds, US Department of Energy (DOE) funding, and US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding. These resources include the Community Development
Block Grant (CDBG), Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), and Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. While the BRA only administers public funds and its sole contract is with the City of Brockton, the employees of the BRA are not public employees. However, the BRA office is located next to Brockton’s City Hall and the employees do work with other City Hall employees, particularly in the Planning Department and Mayor’s Office, and can also be summoned to provide reports to the City Council. The BRA also works in partnership with other organizations like the Brockton 21st Century Corporation, Metro South Chamber of Commerce, private businesses, and developers during the process of administering the city’s grants.

This arrangement between the City of Brockton and the BRA is currently under scrutiny by the City Council after a similar arrangement with a quasi-public non-profit charged with the economic development and marketing of the city, known as Brockton 21st Century Corporation (B21), has resulted in massive mismanagement of its tasks, specifically the Campanelli Stadium and the Shaw’s Conference Center, two of the city-owned economic development initiatives. The funding B21 receives for its economic development role in Brockton was cut by nearly 20% for the 2016 fiscal year and the staff of B21 has been placed under the direction of the city’s Department of Planning and Economic Development even though they are not technically public employees (The Enterprise 2016). For more than six years, the BRA and B21 conducted the economic development and HUD grant administration for Brockton without City Hall oversight. However, in 2014, the city reestablished the position of a planning director. As evidence of the close relationship between the BRA and B21, the BRA actually shares office space with B21.

When interviewing a key administrator of the Community Development Block Grant in Brockton, I asked why Brockton uses the BRA instead of managing the grant funds within its
own city departments. I was told that this used to be a common arrangement in cities, particularly during the urban renewal efforts of the 1960s since as private agencies, redevelopment authorities had more flexibility than public agencies in using eminent domain to clear blighted areas and, since it is not a public agency, it can avoid prolonged public comment periods required if conducted solely by the city. These particular powers as described by this interviewee were confirmed through analysis of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B (Housing and Urban Renewal).

In Brockton, the city’s priorities for the use of its CDBG program funds are set in the 5-Year Consolidated Plan required by HUD. While it is possible to amend the plan, it is rare that a city would do so. Each of the organizations and programs funded with CDBG program funds must then conform to at least one of the goals specified in the 5 Year Plan. In Brockton, the last 5-Year Consolidated Plan was enacted in 2013 and the goals were set by Mayor Balzotti’s administration. Currently, the 2018-2022 plan is being worked on by the BRA with input from the current mayor’s administration. There are ten goals for the 2013-2017 Consolidated Plan which mainly relate to housing stabilization and revitalization, crime reduction, economic development, and homelessness. A full outline of Brockton’s ten goals can be found in Table 1.

When looking at the overall distribution of funds to outside organizations, only about 12 percent is distributed to non-profit organizations in the city. This is approximately $168,000 and is distributed amongst eight organizations. Additionally, each year some of the CDBG program funds, about 8 percent, are given to the Brockton Police to fund a “mobile anti-crime unit”. Nearly 23 percent of the CDBG grant money is paid to the BRA for administering the grant. The remaining funds are designated for programs administered by the BRA for the city, like
loans for business facades, homeowner rehabilitation loans, and loan payments for economic development projects undertaken by the city.

In 2016, only eight non-profits received CDBG program funds, which is the average for the past five years. It tends to be the same non-profits whose proposals are funded each year. In an interview, I inquired how many proposals are unfunded and was told that only one is usually unfunded because that proposal is from an organization whose services do not meet the 5 Year Consolidated Plan goals. Of the eight organizations funded in 2016, only two are explicitly immigrant organizations – the Cape Verdean Association and Haitian Community Partners. However, these two organizations only received a combined $8,000, which is just 5 percent of the funds designated to local non-profits and just 0.6% of the yearly $1.3 million CDBG program funds.

However, an organization does not have to be explicitly an immigrant organization to serve immigrant community members. While an administrator of the Community Development Block Grant in Brockton was very critical of the historic outreach offered by the organizations the funded, it was offered that the organizations are now making more of a concerted effort to reach a more inclusive Brockton population. However, the diversity of the clientele served is not actually an evaluation criterion when assessing the proposals; the criteria that must be met is that the proposal conforms to at least one of the 5 Year Consolidated Plan goals, the proposal is for a service that will predominantly serve low- to moderate-income clients, and that the organization is in good standing the with BRA.

As I mentioned earlier, few new organizations seem to be funded each year. While the Cape Verdean Association has received funds for several years for its youth program, Haitian Community Partners, a fairly new non-profit, is a more recent recipient. When I interviewed the
director of Haitian Community Partners in March of 2015, I inquired about whether they have ever applied for CDBG funds. She said that they had just submitted a proposal (which was ultimately funded) but that she found that process of learning about community grant programs to be opaque. She said, “Technically, it’s supposed to be a public forum…but if you don’t know about it, there’s nothing public about it.” She heard second hand about the program funds and called the Mayor’s Office and a few city councilors in order to get more information right before the 2015 proposal deadline. In 2015, there were zero members of the public in attendance at the public hearings who were not a representative of a funded proposal. In 2016, I was the sole member of the public to attend the public hearing who had not been awarded grant money. In other words, there is essentially zero input from members of the community of any income level.

While Brockton’s public participation in the CDBG program allocations and advertising for a request for proposals seems quite deficient despite this being a key requirement of the HUD program eligibility rules, several employees of the BRA expressed frustration at the public’s lack of participation. Each Annual Plan even states, “Citizen participation at all stages of the CDBG program is encouraged, particularly by persons of low and moderate income who live in areas of slum and blight” (Brockton Annual Plan 2014). According to the BRA, they advertise their request for proposals and notices of public hearings on their website, the City of Brockton’s website, and the local newspaper. When I pointed out to them that the only notices I could find about the public hearing was on the BRA’s website and not on the city’s website, they were surprised and said they would address that going forward. As for the request for proposals, BRA staff reported that they e-mailed it to all past grant recipients as well as posted it on their website and the City of Brockton’s website and distributed the document to the Metro South Chamber of Commerce. However, I could find no record of the request for proposals on the BRA or City of
Brockton’s website. So overall, few of Brockton’s discretionary funds are specifically designated to reach the new immigrant population and the process for securing funds is less than transparent.

**Lowell**

While the CDBG funds in Brockton are administered through a quasi-public organization, Lowell keeps this grant process in-house with their Community Development Department responsible for overseeing these funds. Following the same HUD rules as Brockton, Lowell uses goals established in their 5-Year Consolidated Plan to prioritize the distribution of CDBG program funds.

In 2016, the new 2015-2020 Consolidated Plan was released. The new plan includes nineteen goals as outlined in Table 2. The previous 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan had only eight specified goals, which largely focused on affordable house, non-housing community development, public facilities and infrastructure, and economic development.

Over the past five years, the City of Lowell has averaged $2 million yearly in CDBG program funds from HUD. Of this $2 million, approximately 25 percent is distributed to organizations throughout the city, which is substantially more allocated to non-city programs compared to Brockton’s norm of 12 percent. Also, while the quasi-public Brockton Redevelopment Authority takes about 24 percent of the yearly CDBG program funds in administration costs, the City of Lowell’s Community Development Department is only allocated 17 percent of the total funds as payment for administering the program. The remaining program funds are designated to various departments of the City of Lowell for things like economic development assistance, emergency housing repair, and sanitary code enforcement, which are all programs administered by the city itself.
The largest observable difference between Lowell and Brockton’s use of their CDBG program funds is in Lowell’s broad distribution of the program funds. In contrast to only eight organizations funded in Brockton in 2016, thirty-one organizations received funding in Lowell. Of these thirty-one organizations, five organizations had proposals that directly benefited new immigrants in Lowell. This accounted for 7 percent of all funds distributed to private organizations. This is only slightly better than Brockton’s 5 percent designation. However, unlike in Brockton, several of the other organizations funded also have significant outreach to the broader Lowell community and even include translation of their program documents.

While public participation in the grant process in Lowell has been low to non-existent over the past five years, in Lowell, a “30 day notice of a public hearing held at the Senior Center was advertised in Khmer, Spanish, English and Portuguese and disseminated at the Pollard Library, Clerks Office and DPD Office; in addition to an English post in the Legal Notice section of the Lowell Sun” (Lowell 2015-2020 Consolidated Plan). The request for proposals for CDBG funds was very transparent, with the document available on the city’s website as well as a document demonstrating the evaluation criteria and examples of good applications.

Overall, Lowell’s distribution of CDBG program funds is conducted in a significantly more egalitarian manner than is done in Brockton and the transparency and dispersion of funding leads to a more inclusive use of these discretionary funds.

**School Funding**

In my interviews with elected officials, a standard question I asked was, “What would you identify as your city’s fiscal priorities?” followed by, “How might these priorities include the local immigrant communities?” This question elicited two types of responses: 1) A disclaimer about how the city council does not create the budget or 2) Pointing to the local
schools as a resource for immigrant community members. However, I found that elected officials tended to overestimate the portion of the city budget designated to education.

In Massachusetts, the minimum amount of spending on education required by a community is determined by the Chapter 70 formula, which is a statistical formula calculated by the Massachusetts Department of Education. This formula produces what is known as the “foundation budget” and is meant to establish an adequate spending level for a school district. A district’s foundation budget is derived by multiplying the number of students in fourteen enrollment categories (e.g. number of elementary students, number of enrolled ELL students, and number of low-income students) by the cost rate in eleven functional areas (e.g. administration, classroom and specialist teachers, etc.). Each student included in the formula generates a specific cost in each of the functional areas. A “wage adjustment factor” is then applied that gives a district credit for having higher school costs if it is located in a geographic area with higher average wages (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2015).

After the foundation budget is established for a community, a required local contribution is calculated. This figure establishes how much each community should contribute toward its local public schools’ foundation budget, based on the municipality’s wealth. This formula uses two measures of municipal wealth: aggregate property values and aggregate personal income levels, with each given equal weight. The difference between each district's foundation budget and its required contribution equals the “foundation aid,” which is the amount of education assistance the city receives from the state. Theoretically, each school district must spend the sum of its required district contribution and its Chapter 70 aid each year, which is known as the “net school spending requirement” (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2015).
Education 2015). However, cities are also allowed to overfund their required minimum contribution.

Although federal law, as discussed in Chapter 4, requires that public schools take affirmative steps to overcome educational barriers faced by non-English speaking students, the complete use of funds designated for ELL students do not need to be separately accounted for. The three-part test for determining whether a school is adhering to the federal Equal Education Opportunities Act of 1974 that requires school districts to provide equal educational opportunity and to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs was established under Castañeda v. Pickard in 1981. The three-part test to evaluate the adequacy of a district's program for ELL students is: (1) is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy?; (2) are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel, reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively?; and (3) does the school district evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are actually being overcome? As long as the resources provided to ELL students are considered reasonable to effectively implement the bilingual or ELL learning strategy chosen, the district is free to use its resources as it desires.

**Brockton**

In Brockton, the Department of Bilingual Services is very proud of the work they do and they utilize a variety of innovative means to provide services for their students. However, the funds designated for ELLs in Brockton’s foundation budget it not simply passed through to this department and funding is always a fight. Additionally, the number of students classified as ELLs is increasing in the district, yet funding has not seen similar increases. In fact, most
recently, funding for the Department of Bilingual Services was actually decreased. When looking at budgeting practices specifically, nearly 7 percent of certified teachers are bilingual education teachers although 20 percent of the Brockton school district are ELLs. However, paraprofessionals – not certified teacher’s aids – are often placed in classrooms with a significant number of ELLs and often the paraprofessional is bilingual.

To meet the needs of families who are not English-proficient, the Brockton public schools Department of Bilingual Services relies on Bilingual Community Facilitators, who are publicly paid staff, but are not certified educators. The job of these facilitators is to be the interface between the school and families during registration as well as throughout the school year. For example, if a call ever needs to be made home because of an illness, a discipline issue, or the teacher wants to discuss homework problems with the parents, the Bilingual Community Facilitators serve as the liaison. Additionally, if a parent with limited English proficiency needs to contact the school, their call is routed through the Bilingual Community Facilitators. However, the funding for these positions was recently cut, dropping the total number of Bilingual Community Facilitators from eleven to just nine, resulting in the loss of two Cape Verdean facilitators, reducing their number to three. Additionally, the district has just one Haitian Bilingual Community Facilitator to service the entire district. This was cited as an example of how the district is lacking in total funding to meet the needs of the new immigrant communities.

With Brockton’s growing population of ELLs despite diminishing resources, the Department of Bilingual Services bought cell phones for all nine of the remaining Bilingual Community Facilitators. This allows the facilitators to be present at one school yet meet the translation needs of a variety of schools. When seeking to clarify if the Bilingual Community
Facilitators were a Brockton-born idea or if any state or federal laws led to their introduction, I was told that the city has to ensure that parents have equal access and have information about the educational programming in the district, however, the community facilitators are Brockton’s unique solution to this interpretation mandate. To meet this mandate, Brockton also pays the Bilingual Community Facilitators or some bilingual teachers additional funds for translating forms, flyers, and documents. So while the requirement is a general federal mandate, the Bilingual Community Facilitators is Brockton’s specific solution, which likely would not be funded without the federal requirements for inclusion.

Another way Brockton has been innovative in helping its new immigrant communities is the establishment of Brockton Public Schools’ Family Advocacy and Engagement Center that opened in the spring of 2015. This advocacy center is staffed by three bilingual advocates with roots in the community who speak Cape Verdean Creole, French Creole, and Spanish. The goal of this center is to assist linguistic and cultural minority families in navigating the public school system. However, the initial $108,000 in funding for this advocacy center is a federal immigrant student grant (Bolton 2015). After initial federal grant funding for the bilingual family advocates expired, Brockton did fund this initiative with its local budget. However, the Brockton Public Schools bilingual programs remain understaffed and the department must continue to look for additional funding to support staffing and programmatic initiatives that support bilingual families (Smith 2015). Additionally, despite state law requiring a minimum local contribution, in 2015 (the most recent school year reported), Brockton Public Schools failed to meet its required net school spending by nearly $400,000 (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2016).

Lowell
In Lowell, approximately 3,500 (25 percent) of the district’s 14,200 students are English Language Learners who speak over 38 different languages. The two most common languages spoken are Khmer at 33 percent and Spanish at 37 percent (Lowell Public Schools). Of the 1,000 teachers employed by Lowell Public Schools, 20 percent teach in programs designed for English Learners.

While in Brockton, the Department of Bilingual Services provides a centralized program for overseeing all of the ELLs in the district, Lowell’s English Language Education Department is much more decentralized. This places the burden on individual schools to meet the needs of new immigrants within their own schools with minimal support provided by Lowell’s English Language Education Department. However, similar to Brockton’s advocacy center, Lowell has a Family Resource Center that is a central resource for new immigrants, though not necessarily teachers. The center is to provide assistance to parents, guardians and students in accessing the educational services of the Lowell Public Schools and other community resources as well as provides the services necessary to effectively and efficiently implement Lowell’s Voluntary Revised Desegregation and Educational Improvement Plan. In 1987, it was determined by a federal judge that Lowell was deficient in meeting the needs of racial and linguistic minorities in the community due to its isolation of these students in a few schools. Today, Lowell must still comply with bussing and other requirements in order to achieve the integration required by the Lowell Voluntary Desegregation and Educational Improvement Plan (1987).

Because the assistance provided for those with limited English proficiency is so disperse, it is difficult to assess the resources specifically designated for new immigrants. It is also very likely that the quality of assistance varies because of the disperse model. So while the schools and facilities might now be equal and Lowell is in compliance with federal laws, the way in
which Lowell leverages its funds to meet the needs of new immigrants in the community do not appear to be as innovative or as intentional as is being done in Brockton.

**Police Funding**

Although the majority of funding for local police forces are general budgetary items, the way in which new immigrants are considered in the designation of resources can be seen in the way the city funds officers of color or officers whose duties include an explicit community outreach component. Since police officers are public employees, the city budget includes a line item for each officer specifying their pay. By analyzing this document as well as matching officers with specific community duties to their pay scale in the city budgets, a more nuanced understanding of how new gateway cities financially prioritize immigrant community members in their policing strategies can be ascertained.

**Brockton**

The way in which Brockton prioritizes, or even recognizes, new immigrants in the use of resources designated to policing is limited in scope overall. When analyzing the budget, it can be seen in three areas: the hiring of bilingual police officers, the approval of funding for bilingual dispatchers, and the funding of two community resource officers, one of which is Cape Verdean.

**Diverse Officers**

During the past two years there has been an increase in the hiring of police officers for the city. While not necessarily a nod to the immigrant community on its face, these positions are largely being filled by officers of color. In 2015, nine new officers were added to Brockton’s police force. Of these nine, two of the recruits are White, while seven of the nine are of Haitian, Cape Verdean, African American, or Asian descent. In order to achieve this diversity, the City Council had to approve the funding for these positions. The mayor then worked with merit-
based Civil Service system for six months to bring on board multi-lingual Cape Verdean and Haitian recruits (Wicked Local, May 19, 2015). Although it seems practical to match bilingual officers with communities where that language is a dominant local language, a lieutenant in the Brockton Police that I interviewed insisted that, “That is NOT the norm and they were told by Civil Service that will not happen again.” When asked why, he explained that this was exclusive to Brockton that they did that and it must have been hours of labor to create those lists. When asked for additional clarification why this would not be allowed, he said he did not really understand, but somehow sorting by language spoken was not allowed. It appears that cities are supposed to simply receive a list of people who have passed the Civil Service exam with the highest scores, not nuanced characteristics of individuals.

While prioritizing the hiring of an ethnically diverse force is commendable, the actual resources of the city spent on officers of color is miniscule compared to white officers since they only comprise 28 percent of the force. Additionally, only one of the officers of color is working in a supervisory capacity, which is a Hispanic female in a temporary Sergeant rank, which is one rank about patrol officer, which is the lowest rank and the position held by the other 51 officers of color in the Brockton Police department. While the average salary of Brockton’s patrol officers is $86,000, since most of Brockton’s officers of color, particularly bilingual officers, are new hires, their pay is, on average, 15 percent less than White officers due to their newness to the profession and the department.

**Multilingual Dispatchers**

In July 2016, the Brockton City Council received and ultimately approved a request from the Mayor for the Brockton Police, outside of the normal budget cycle, to fund two dispatchers who speak Cape Verdean Creole for the Brockton Police. Prior to this appropriation request,
none of the city’s dispatchers spoke Cape Verdean Creole despite this being the dominant local language for many new immigrants. While these positions were ultimately approved unanimously despite discontent about the request not being part of the normal budget cycle, during the finance committee hearing on the matter, one councilor-at-large dismissed the need for bilingual specific dispatchers on the grounds that all dispatchers in MA have access to the state 911 system that offers translation assistance. Under this system, the local dispatcher would have to transfer the call to one of the translators contracted by the state’s 911 system. While this service is available to cities and towns for no additional cost, it is inefficient when there is an emergency.

Councilor-at-large Moises Rodrigues, himself a Cape Verdean immigrant, responded by pointing out that employing Cape Verdean Creole-speaking dispatchers is long overdue in Brockton and if the rest of the council feels otherwise, it shows that the elected body is “a little out of touch with the reality of this community. Your largest ethnic group does not have the ability to call the police department to say someone is breaking into my home or house. I’ve complained about this for the longest time. ... We all know that, in the case of an emergency, you tend to revert back to your native language. And if you don’t have the ability to communicate that, shame on us for not doing that.” (Larocque 2016).

From a financial allocations perspective, the City Council ultimately approved an additional $130,000 to fund these two new bilingual dispatcher positions. This equates to a 16% increase in Brockton’s funding for Emergency Telephone Dispatchers, which is entirely designated to improving communication between the police and the city’s immigrant communities.

Community Resource Officers
As mentioned in chapter four, Brockton does not have a formal community policing strategy. The lack of trust between new immigrant communities and the local police force was highlighted in a 2010 Public Safety Task Force report commissioned by the mayor at that time, Linda Balzotti. A distrust of authority, particularly in the local immigrant communities, was identified as a challenge for the city. The report posited that “many Brockton citizens have negative feelings toward law enforcement, for reasons that are wholly unrelated to experiences in this country” but instead are due to “a cultural bias against law enforcement generally” or “negative associations [that] were built into their own early experiences.” While the actions of Brockton or Massachusetts State Police might not be the direct reason for the distrust, the report acknowledged that these associations create obstacles to successful police collaboration with members of the immigrant community. These barriers must be understood before they are overcome.

In that report, the implementation of some community policing tactics were recommended, particularly through the creation of neighborhood councils. The idea was that neighborhood councils could increase a sense of community within each precinct and ward and promote a constructive relationship between the local police and the community. As part of this recommended plan, each neighborhood council would have a community police officer assigned to serve as their liaison who would be responsible to attend regular meetings of the neighborhood council and advise the community on public safety initiatives for their neighborhoods. However, the establishment of neighborhood councils, and much of the task forces’ report, was never implemented, despite the fact that it was highlighted as a means to form better relationships with new immigrants.
It was not until 2014 that a more substantive and formal relationship was initiated between the police and community through the development of the community resource officer, whose job is specifically to form relationships between the community and the police. The role these officers play in forming relationships with the new immigrant community is real, but there are now two officers who are assigned full-time to this position, which equates to nearly $200,000 of the police salary budget allocated for these positions. This is a mere 1.5 percent of all salaries in the Brockton Police Department. While the work these officers due with the new immigrant communities is good, the fact that Brockton’s policing strategy is not based on a community policing model means that, other than these two officers, the vast majority of officers do not have intentional engagement with the community as a key part of their everyday job.

**Lowell**

Since Lowell employs a community policing strategy, it is a bit harder to extricate specific expenditures that directly benefit their immigrant communities. In contrast to Brockton’s policing strategy, because of Lowell’s community policing strategy, there is more opportunity for patrol officers to have positive interactions with new immigrants. Lowell is not necessarily that far ahead of Brockton on this strategy though; the reorganizing of its organizational structure only began in 2014 with the final reorganizational phase completed in 2015 (Lowell Police Department 2015 Annual Report). As part of Lowell’s community policing strategy, the city is divided into four districts. Officers are then assigned to a particular district so they develop more relationships within that part of the community. According to an interviewee from the Lowell Police, since the city is fairly racially and ethnically segregated, the officers of color or with bilingual skills are assigned to a district where the community most matches that officer’s demographics.
While the community policing model means that more officers have specific community outreach duties in immigrant enclaves, there are also a few positions and programs where resources have been allocated by the city and function to intentionally serve immigrant community members. This is seen in the use of civilian employees, particularly in the role of community relations, the Lowell Student Police Academy, and the budgeting for attendance of officers at community meetings.

**Civilian employees.**

Since the arrival of Lowell’s most recent City Manager, Kevin Murphy, in 2013, there has been a concerted effort to increase the total number of officers through new hires as well as increase the number of officers actively patrolling by redeploying officers who previously were performing police civilian functions (Lowell Police Department 2015 Annual Report). By leveraging civilians within the Lowell Police, they have been able to build meaningful relationships with immigrants and execute several community plans.

In terms of numbers, in 2015 Lowell had 97 civilian employees which comprised 30 percent of all Lowell Police employees. Civilian employees are typically paid less than sworn officers, which also better leverages the city’s budget. Amongst these civilian employees, a few positions that provide meaningful connections with immigrant communities include the Director of Community Relations and two program managers.

The community relations done by these civilian employees include planning community outreach events like Coffee with a Cop and movie nights in parts of immigrant communities. During Coffee with a Cop, community members are invited to meet with local police and ask any questions they may have. Translation is available at this event. The movie nights are used
as a tool to build relationships between the local police and the community. Police officers attend the movie nights and interact with the event attendees prior to and after the movie.

Another initiative done by civilian employees of the Lowell Police Department is quarterly tours of the police station for new immigrants. These tours are arranged by a civilian employee and new immigrants are invited through several of the immigrant organizations in the city. During the tour, the new immigrants are welcomed to the city, given a lesson in American laws they may be unfamiliar with (particularly regarding domestic violence), and resources offered through the police department are explained.

This innovative programming that is planned and often executed by civilian employees of the Lowell Police Department allows the local police to form a more positive relationship with all of the city residents while also not removing police from the streets.

**Lowell student police academy.**

Another way the Lowell Police Department’s budget is used in a way that benefits new immigrants is through the Lowell Student Police Academy. This is a summer leadership program run by the Lowell Police Department's School Resource Officers and is open to incoming 5th through 8th graders. The Student Police Academy teaches student officers a wide variety of skills, including CPR and first aid, bullying prevention, gang awareness and prevention, avoiding peer pressure, internet safety, and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. The program is designed to help Student Officers develop self-esteem and self-confidence, work within a team, and build leadership skills. The Student Police Academy also includes physical training and health classes. In the last 15 years, over 3200 students have graduated from the Lowell Student Police Academy, many of whom are from immigrant families. This program is a
tool used by the Lowell Police to build bridges with Lowell’s immigrant communities and create more understanding between these groups.

Public meetings.

One of the most obvious ways for a local police force to be accessible to its community is for it to be present at community events and meetings. However, this is often not a priority of police departments because attendance at such meetings costs money. However, for the fiscal year 2017, attendance at community meetings by employees of the Lowell Police was added as a success indicator, with the goal of attendance at 50 meetings. Additionally, a goal of 25 community policing problem solving activities to conduct with local communities was added as a line item for tracking performance (Lowell Police Department 2015 Annual Report).

When evaluated on the face of simply community relations, Lowell’s police seem to execute more meaningful programs and develop and maintain better relationships with the new immigrant community. However, the financial investment required to diversify the staff of a police force is occurring much more rapidly in Brockton. Having people in power who looks like the community it serves should not be underestimated.

Conclusion

Whether Lowell and Brockton are using their financial resources in a way that is inclusive to new immigrants is not consistent across the three areas analyzed in this dissertation: CDBG program use, the public schools, and the local police. In Brockton, the majority of its CDBG program funds are being utilized for the city’s economic development projects. While these projects will also benefit the new immigrant residents, there is little specific recognition of and funding designated to meet the needs of these new Brockton residents. Additionally, the process for submitting a proposal for funding or providing public comment is very hard to
access. In Lowell, a much larger portion of the CDBG funding is distributed to non-profits throughout the city, including many organizations that are explicitly immigrant non-profits. The process for submitting a proposal for funding is also much more transparent and open to the public. However, the Brockton Public Schools are leveraging their funding as well as additional grants to provide innovative services to the students and parents who have limited English proficiency in a way that is not comparable in Lowell. The evaluation of the budgetary priorities of the police forces in these two gateway communities is less clear-cut. Compared to Lowell, the Brockton police are more actively seeking to racially and linguistically diversify their force and dispatchers, but Lowell’s local police force has a much more community-minded policing strategy as well as goals that have created a more positive relationship between the police and the new immigrant communities. This certainly makes one question whether recognition and inclusion is superior to actual power in the police institutional structure.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSION

America has always had an identity as a country of immigrants and since the signing of the landmark 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, a total of 59 million people have migrated to the United States (Lopez, et al 2015). This 1965 legislation ended the prior system of quotas based on national origin, which restricted immigration from Asia and Africa, and gave preference to northern and western Europeans over southern and eastern Europeans. This influx of immigrants since 1965 has pushed the United States’ percent foreign born to 14 percent and these modern immigrants account for just over half of America’s population growth (Lopez, et al 2015). In addition to the significant role immigration has played in population growth, these new immigrants have radically reshaped America’s racial and ethnic composition (Lopez, et al 2015).

For much of American history, immigrants have tended to settle in just a handful of cities like New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Miami, and Chicago. However, since the 1990s, many mid-size cities in the United States have experienced drastic demographic changes as new immigrants are choosing to directly settle in a variety of locations. Research on these non-traditional gateway cities has found that the social and economic incorporation of immigrants differs in fundamental ways from incorporation in traditional gateways, including in immigration history, size, and the existence and strength of institutional arrangements (Waters and Jiménez 2005). Because new destinations are much smaller than traditional gateway cities, some problems often experienced by new immigrants, like complete social isolation, have been found to be less severe in new gateway cities (Waters and Jiménez 2005; Park and Iceland 2011). However, the existence of institutional arrangements that aid in immigrant assimilation in
traditional gateways, like legal aid, health clinics, social organizations, and bilingual services, tend to be lacking in new destinations. Additionally, while the governmental bureaucracies and non-profits in established gateways have experience with navigating immigrant problems and issues, new destinations largely are not equipped to handle these needs (Waters and Jiménez 2005 and Donato, Tolbert, Nucci, and Kawano 2008).

While the social and economic inclusion of new immigrants in non-traditional gateways has experienced significant study, research on the political inclusion of these immigrants in new gateway cities is still emerging. The current studies on political inclusion have found local elected officials are slow to respond to the demographic changes in their community but that the local police and public education system tend to be more responsive, particularly in regards to translation services. Since the majority of this limited research on the political incorporation of new immigrants in non-traditional gateway cities has been done in Texas and California and has largely focused on Hispanic and East Asian immigrants, this research sought to nuance existing sociological literature in regards to geography and diversity of immigrant characteristic through an institution-level analysis of new gateway cities in New England. Two cities in Massachusetts – Lowell and Brockton – were selected as case study cities because they have a similar manufacturing history, population size, distance from Boston, and their new immigrant populations – predominantly Cape Verdean and Haitian in Brockton and Cambodian in Lowell – expand the immigrant groups that have typically been studied.

This analysis was conducted through a variety of methodological means, including interviews with elected officials, city hall employees, police officers, educators, religious leaders, and immigrant community leaders, a document analysis of the local police and public school budgets, examination of the distribution of Community Development Block Grant program
funds, review of Coordinated Program Reviews conducted by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the subsequent responses (Corrective Action Plans), and participant observation at City Council meetings, public hearings, and community events.

This dissertation addressed two main questions: First, in what ways are elected officials, non-elected government employees, local police forces, and public education systems adapting their policies and routines in order to recognize and accommodate the increasingly large presence of immigrants? And second, in what ways does the political incorporation of immigrants in these non-traditional gateways cities differ from the political incorporation of immigrants in traditional gateways?

Local Political Incorporation in New England’s New Gateways

In regards to the first question, there was an uneven response amongst elected officials to the demographic changes occurring in the city. The gender and race of an elected official seemed to influence the adaptive strategies used to communicate with and include new immigrants, with women and elected officials of color more likely to attend ethnic events, reach out to immigrant community groups, and have thoughtful strategies for how to communicate with constituents with limited English proficiency. However, the particular city charter organizing the political structure of the city appears to be a more important factor in allowing immigrants to achieve political power.

A city’s charter determines how elections are conducted. In Lowell, the structure was a council-manager system while in Brockton it was a mayor-council system. In Lowell, all the city councilors and school committee members are elected at-large while Brockton has a mixed at-large/ward system. As prior research demonstrates, the at-large system severely disadvantages minorities and tends to concentrate power in wealthy neighborhoods (Davidson
and Korbel, 1981; Welch, 1990). Because of this, the at-large system makes it very difficult for the elected officials to reflect the demographics of the larger city. This was seen in Lowell where all of the elected officials were white and the majority of them lived in just one neighborhood - Belvidere. In Brockton, with a mixed at-large/ward system, more diversity has been achieved amongst elected officials, though the current elected officials are still predominantly white.

While a particular city charter can be clearly correlated with the diversity of the elected officials, it is unlikely a city charter will be adjusted in response to significant demographic changes, though it is not unprecedented (Siefer, 2016). In Brockton, when a black city councilor proposed forming a committee reflective of the city to evaluate its government structure in 2014, it was largely met with hostility (especially from white elected officials) and was ultimately voted down. In Lowell, a city councilor made a similar motion in 2016 and he could not even receive a second on his motion to proceed to further discussion.

While most elected officials did not change their routines to accommodate the growing immigrant populations in their city, street-level bureaucrats have no choice but to serve all constituents. However, in either city’s City Hall, no formal policies have been established concerning how to best help a constituent with limited English proficiency. In the absence of formal rules, these street-level bureaucrats have significant discretion as to how much they want to modify their regular routines in order to provide service. In both cities, a bilingual employee in a different office could be contacted for translation assistance, which was sometimes done even without formal rules requiring a City Hall employee provide this level of service. Other informal strategies used by City Hall street-level bureaucrats include allowing a customer with limited English proficiency to call a friend for translation assistance, to recommend the
constituent returns with their own translator or contact their local ethnic organization for assistance in navigating local bureaucracy, or, in one example, taking the initiative to learn a few phrases in the dominant local languages so basic services (like dog licenses) could be obtained without a return trip. While none of the street-level bureaucrats interviewed expressed feeling unequipped to serve all of their constituents, many did credit the addition of some bilingual staff as an improvement to their daily work.

While street-level bureaucrats in City Hall have no formal policies about the best way to serve new immigrant constituents, the local police and the public education system have to adhere to state and federal laws regarding equal treatment of all constituents. For the police, there are both federal laws and professional norms that stipulate the equal treatment of the citizens. Even though direct oversight by the Justice Department is rare without an egregious violation, this research, as well as prior studies, show that police departments are more likely than elected officials and City Hall to have formal strategies for helping new immigrant constituents (Lewis and Ramakrishnan, 2007; Williams, 2015). While there are no formal translation strategies, in Brockton, the norm is for an officer encountering a constituent with limited English proficiency to summon to the scene a bilingual officer. In order to provide the language resources needed, the City of Brockton has designated specific resources to the hiring of multi-lingual officers and dispatchers. In Lowell, where the police force is less demographically reflective of the city residents but the city is ethnically segregated, the limited bilingual officers are assigned to sections of the city that most reflect their personal demographics.

In both New England gateway cities studied, the police have much more formalized outreach strategies inclusive of the new immigrants in the community. While immigrants in
these communities may not feel fully welcome and, in some cases, feel over policed because of their skin color or culture, the local police are changing their institutional-level strategies and patterns of policing in response to the diversification of the community.

The local public school systems offer the greatest examples of institutional-level changes to accommodate new immigrants. The professional norms that stipulate education to be an inclusive environment coupled with strict federal laws regarding equal access to education result in institutional-level actions that aid in the inclusion of new immigrants. In particular, the public school system has to offer translated written material as well as provide oral translation when needed. Since there is not one specific method to meet these legal requirements, in Brockton, the combination of a centralized Family Center and translators equipped with cellphones that are dispersed throughout the school system, meet this need. In Lowell, there is largely reliance on the centralized Family Center and they have been reprimanded by the State of Massachusetts for failing to provide adequate translation. While an equal education is the legal requirement, not all school districts equally meet this requirement, be it due to teacher training, adequate classroom facilities, or even the quality of the ELL programming resources. However, because the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education investigates each school district every six years and requires compliance plans on any area deemed inadequate, the local public school system has significant incentives to make institutional-level changes that incorporate new immigrants.

**Local Political Incorporation in New Gateways versus Traditional Gateways**

A second point of inquiry for this research was to evaluate whether the methods of political inclusion often observed in traditional gateways are also present in New England’s non-traditional gateway cities. This research found that the established means for incorporating new
immigrants, like strong local political parties and unions, are not as prevalent or influential in new gateways. While Brockton has an active local Democratic City Committee, the majority of the leadership and active membership are white and they have not actively sought to broaden their ranks, though some local Haitians are self-mobilizing as part of this group. In Lowell, there is limited political mobilization of immigrants through local political parties.

Public agencies that aid in the naturalization of immigrants are also an important resource for the political inclusion of new immigrants in traditional gateway cities. For example, Boston has partnered with US Citizenship and Immigration Services to train local librarians and city officials in the naturalization process and providing greater access to information and resources through the creation of “Citizenship Corners” in public libraries (Fiore 2015). The goal of this partnership is to strengthen citizenship education among new immigrants. Some traditional gateway cities also have specific departments tasked with enhancing the quality of life of immigrants through political incorporation and improvement of access to social services (Gerstle and Mollenkopf 2001; Ramakrishnan and Lewis 2005). In Brockton and Lowell, no similar public agencies are providing services to aid in citizenship acquisition or in access to city services.

A final key resource that has a long history of aiding in the political inclusion of immigrants in traditional gateway cities is the dense presence of ethnic and civic organizations. Ethnic and civic organizations, like mutual aid societies, church groups, and women’s organizations have been crucial in making voters out of immigrants and in helping them politically adapt to the United States system of governance. Because traditional gateway cities have a history of continuous migration, such groups have normalized the political inclusion of

Of all the common methods for political incorporation of new immigrants in traditional gateway cities, political incorporation through ethnic and civic organizations is the only one that can be seen occurring in New England’s new gateways. However, in both Lowell and Brockton, these organizations are just beginning to see this as an extension of their community service. In Lowell, the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association has long assisted new immigrants with the process of naturalization, but it has only recently embraced its role as a gatekeeper to a key electorate by holding its first candidate’s forum in 2015 and successfully petitioning the City of Lowell to be an early voting location for the 2016 election. The International Institute of New England, located in Lowell, is also an important resource for new immigrants learning about civic engagement as it assists in naturalization.

In Brockton, the Cape Verdean Association also provides assistance with naturalization, but has not become politically influential at the local level. However, Haitian Community Partners, only founded in 2013, is attempting to influence local political power through the political development of new immigrants and are even registered as a 501(c)4 in order to allow more leeway for it to be politically active in the community. In addition to these ethnic organizations, the nonprofit group Community Connections frequently hosts citizenship clinics and its primary clientele are new immigrants. Finally, the nonprofit Brockton Interfaith Community is very active on local political issues, has immigrants in significant leadership positions, and works hard to politically mobilize new immigrants, even those who have yet to have voting rights. One example of this is a recent local candidates and local issues forum that was held at a predominantly immigrant church. Perhaps, with time, New England’s new
gateway communities will develop political incorporation resources similar to traditional gateways.

**Cultural Appreciation vs. Institutional Power**

A noticeable difference between the two case study cities was the degree to which the new immigrants’ cultures were valued and celebrated at the institutional level, the extent to which the new immigrants were included in the overall vision of the city, and the level of institutional power granted to immigrants within the city’s political structure. In Lowell, immigrant leadership, particularly within the Cambodian community, felt significantly valued by the city and believed themselves to be part of the city’s future vision. The ways new and old immigrants are included in Lowell’s city structure is evidenced by the number of flag raisings performed at City Hall each year, inclusion of new immigrant groups at city-wide ethnic festivals, participation of elected officials in events sponsored by new immigrant groups, and communication from City Hall about upcoming events, grant opportunities, and board openings. However, one of the main reasons Lowell was selected for inclusion in this dissertation research was because a quick analysis renders an entirely white slate of elected officials. The lack of institutional power for people of color and new immigrants is troubling. However, despite this lack of institutional power, the new immigrants generally felt satisfied with their inclusion in the community.

In Brockton, there was significant discontent from the dominant new immigrant communities – Cape Verdeans and Haitians – about their inclusion in the community. They felt that they were often perceived as a burden to the community and that there were few visible or meaningful efforts being put forth to include them in the narrative of the city. In a few instances, interviewees with significant authority would give examples of others in power expressing just
these feelings, so it is not simply paranoia from those without power. However, both immigrant groups saw themselves as economic and political assets to the city and intend to make the institutional structures in Brockton recognize this, even if it takes times. While the current mayor has used the immigrant community as a resource for achieving election, they do not feel that the other elected officials or people with influence, in general, see them as an asset or even a resource.

In Brockton, the lack of communication between the institutional structure and the immigrant community was often cited as a primary reason for feeling excluded. The communication structures in Brockton are terrible and are not currently conducted in a way that can even be inclusive. Immigrant organizations like Haitian Community Partners and the Cape Verdean Association as well as religious institutions in the city all felt that an easy way to make new immigrants feel more valued in the city would be to include them in any emails dispersed through-out the city. While this seems like an easy first step, a city employee or community volunteer would have to take the initiative to develop such a list and then the bureaucratic structure would have to implement such patterns of communication into its regular routine.

**Country of Origin and Political Inclusion**

One possibly significant factor not accounted for elsewhere in this dissertation is the role that country of origin may play in the local political incorporation of these immigrants. As demonstrated in assimilation literature, an immigrant’s country of origin influences their likelihood of political engagement in their new location, though it interacts with other key characteristics like education and income (Bueker, 2005). This “source country effect” on political incorporation means that the naturalization rates of an immigrant are inversely related to the ease with which he or she can return home, be it because of geographic, political, or
economic reasons (Bueker, 2005). While, those who are least likely to naturalize are most likely to vote (Bueker, 2005; DeSipio, 2011; and Marrow, 2005), the likelihood of political participation can be increased amongst all immigrant groups through the active political mobilization of the immigrant community (Bueker, 2005).

Although this dissertation was an institutional-analysis of the way in which immigrants are being included in local politics in New England and not an assimilation study, the limited attentiveness of the local political structure towards the new immigrants in Lowell and Brockton might be partially understood by these individual-level factors. In Lowell, where many of the immigrants are refugees because of politically oppressive regimes, it is unsurprising that they have been hesitant to involve themselves in American politics. However, community leaders in the Cambodian community are predicting this will soon change as the second generation of immigrants, who do not have those same immediate politically oppressive experiences, forms itself into a voting bloc. An additional explanation for the lack of Cambodian political integration offered by both immigrant community leaders as well as elected officials is that many Cambodians have eschewed American politics due to involvement in politics in their homeland. In fact, the divisive political scene in Cambodia has even spilled over into social relations in Lowell. Again, Cambodian community leaders are dismissive of this as a long-term trend in the Cambodian community since it is predominantly the first generation of immigrants that are involved in homeland politics.

In Brockton, Cape Verdeans, also maintain their citizenship abroad and are active participants in Cape Verdean elections. Some of my interviewees pointed to this as an explanation for why Cape Verdeans have limited political power in Brockton and why they have not mobilized in local politics in any significant manner. However, the pattern of reduced
political participation for immigrants who come from repressive regimes does not seem to hold for Brockton’s Haitian community. Although Haiti’s political environment is best characterized by coup d’états and regime changes, Brockton’s Haitian community is actively mobilizing its new immigrants to achieve board appointments, recognition from elected officials, and institutional power. In the 2015 local elections, Haitian Community Partners even fielded a candidate for councilor-at-large who made it on the general election ballot, though he ultimately placed seventh out of eight candidates.

So, while one explanation for the lack of representative political power is a disinterested new immigrant community, to only focus on this factor ignores significant institutional-level barriers to political incorporation, particularly due to a city’s charter and communication processes.

Theoretical Applicability

As stated in the Introduction, this research in general and the questions asked in interviews were informed by four sociological theories. The first two theories, ethnic competition theory and contact theory, are theoretical approaches for explaining attitudes towards immigrants, particularly on the basis of the master status characteristics of the immigrant communities and the elected and non-elected government officials. The other two theories, rational political exchange theory and the theory of social construction of target populations in public policy explain why public-private partnerships develop between local government officials and immigrant communities.
Contact versus Ethnic Competition Theory

Contact theory is the notion that inter-group racial conflict is alleviated by group interaction. Thus, the more positive contact had between competing groups, the less competitive feelings will exist (Allport, 1954). In contrast, in ethnic competition theory, the main assumption is that the attitudes and behaviors of a dominant group primarily serve to maintain that group’s status position, resources, and culture in terms of identity and values (Schneider 2008). Therefore, ethnic competition theory suggests a positive relationship between out-group size and anti-immigrant attitudes among the majority.

In this research, elected officials most likely to participate in events sponsored by ethnic organizations also spoke more positively about the new immigrants when interviewed. Also, the elected officials that immigrant leaders cited as the ones they were most likely to approach about needs in their community were those who participated in such events. This may indicate that the additional contact helped to alleviate negative feelings towards the new immigrants, though causality is impossible to demonstrate. Did these particular elected officials develop more positive feelings because of interaction? Or are their personal demographics (e.g. race or gender) responsible for their involvement with the immigrant communities?

City Hall employees who had bilingual co-workers were also more likely to have examples of creative ways they help the new immigrant population. Similarly, the local police officers interviewed, both white and minorities, were quick to provide examples of how contact with officers of color helped to reduce prejudice. For example, white officers were more likely to accept cultural explanations for particular behaviors from a fellow officer from that culture than from a diversity or cultural competency trainer. For those in public education, contact
theory also was resonate. For example, a key administrator in Brockton provided an example of how a school committee member, who had previously expressed opinions indicating he felt that new immigrant children were a drain on city resources, tempered his opinions after working more closely with new immigrants on a bilingual education program.

Based on interviews and observations, contact theory seems like a more salient explanation for the attitudes of local elected officials and street-level bureaucrats than ethnic competition theory. However, while no elected officials or street-level bureaucrats specifically expressed feelings of threat due to the new immigrants’ race, it is impossible to not notice that Brockton’s predominantly brown and black new immigrants feel excluded from the community’s narrative while the new immigrants in Lowell, who are predominantly Asian, feel included in the vision for the city’s future.

**Rational Political Exchange Theory versus the Theory of Social Construction of Target Populations in Public Policy**

Rational political exchange theory and the theory of social construction of target populations in public policy were two theoretical frameworks that helped shape this research’s interview questions and analysis about why public-private partnerships develop between local government officials and immigrant communities. Rational political exchange theory purports that when immigrant communities grow large, elected and nonelected government officials make strategic decisions, like in the distribution of funding to immigrant organizations, in order to achieve political goals (Marwell, 2004; Marwell, 2007; Frasure and Jones-Correa, 2010; Hopkins, 2010, Ramakrishnan and Wong, 2010). Sometimes these decisions benefit the new immigrant community and other times it might be applied against the new immigrants. In both cases, it is a rational strategy between a group in power and a private group.
While rational political exchange theory is a straightforward explanation that posits that public-private partnerships develop as the result of either political exchange or partisanship, the theory of social construction of target populations in public policy allows for the introduction of an alternative mechanism that might influence the relationship: social constructions of target populations (Schneider and Ingram, 1993; de Graauw, Gleason, and Bloemraad, 2013). That is, the local government employs various narrative strategies that often place immigrants outside of the socially constructed target population they wish to serve and thus impacts the distribution of resources and the development of public-private partnerships.

In this research, there were few examples found that support rational political exchange theory. Most elected officials had limited partnerships with the immigrant communities. Even the one Cape VerDean city councilor in Brockton did not utilize his position in a way to explicitly benefit the Cape VerDean community, which was a point of contention for some Cape Verdeans. The one exception to this is the mayor of Brockton, Bill Carpenter, who partnered with the Haitian community during his initial mayoral run as well as his successful reelection bid. This resulted in the Mayor hiring several Haitians as part of his staff. Additionally, Haitian Community Partners has greater access to the Mayor’s Office than other non-profits because of this rational partnership. However, in terms of institutional-level actions, in both Lowell and Brockton, no interviewees could think of any laws or policies specifically constructed to either benefit or harm the new immigrant communities.

Again, because of limited partnerships, the theory of social construction of target populations in public policy is also little evidenced in this research. In Lowell, where there is a city narrative that is inclusive of the new immigrants, several interviewees specifically referenced the initial refugee status of the Cambodian community as a group worthy of support.
However, this narrative inclusion has not equated to political empowerment and the public-private partnerships that have developed are largely for the promotion of the inclusive narrative, like flag raisings and Khmer New Year. However, when specifically questioned about economic resources used for the benefit of the new immigrants, most elected officials would comment that such services, like translation, do not need to be funded because the non-profit Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association is adequately fulfilling that need. In Brockton, there was not a consistent social construction about whether the new immigrants were deserving of city resources. As previously mentioned, the one partnership that has developed between the Brockton mayor and the non-profit Haitian Community Partners is more of a rational political exchange.

**Recommendations for Political Inclusivity in New Gateway Cities**

While the case study cities varied in how well they welcomed, treated, and incorporated immigrants across different factors, there are some consistent areas where both cities could improve and that are relevant to all new gateway cities. They include a better institutional-level understanding of characteristics of their new immigrant communities, the promotion of civic engagement amongst new immigrants, cultural and language sensitivity in service delivery, and the creation of inclusive methods of communication.

**Understand Local Immigration Dynamics**

One reason this dissertation adds to the body of research on the political inclusion of immigrants in new gateways is because it geographically extends existing research, which has largely been on the West Coast. However, in many of New England’s new immigrant gateway cities, there is no monolithic immigrant group. As demonstrated by the diversity of the
immigrants in Lowell and Brockton, the immigration context can vary tremendously between metropolitan areas.

Therefore, every local government needs to make an effort to understand the characteristics of its local immigrant community (Singer, 2004). While many elected officials and street-level bureaucrats had a general sense of their community, they were often caught off guard by data I obtained from the American Community Survey. For example, often the economic status, education level, and naturalization status of the local immigrants tended to be underestimated while the percent with limited English proficiency would be overestimated. If you do not know even the most basic demographics of your community and how needs vary between groups, it can be challenging to design relevant service programs.

Because of the difficulty involved with meeting the needs of a quickly changing demographic, many community and faith-based organizations serve as the “first responders” that have good knowledge about what is happening in their immediate neighborhood but they may lack specific empirical data about their local service areas. Therefore, a deeper, empirical understanding of the local immigrant community would be beneficial to both local non-profits as well as the city government. Additionally, while some specific employees are knowledgeable about the local population, particularly public school administrators, the sharing of this information more widely might impact both the perceptions of elected officials and street-level bureaucrats and in turn alter their actions.

The data needed to create a detailed community profile is already publicly available. If cities were to train some employees in how to analyze data from the American Community Survey, Census, and information collected in the public schools by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and then widely distribute such a report,
elected officials, street-level bureaucrats, and community leaders would be better equipped to understand local trends and service needs.

**Cultural and Language Sensitivity in Service Delivery**

It is often through the context of service delivery that local entities, both private and public, connect immigrants to the broader gateway community. However, access to such services may be limited by the level of English proficiency of many new immigrants. In traditional gateway cities, this barrier is often overcome by developing the city’s capacity to supply information and signage, deliver basic services, and provide public safety in the dominant languages of new immigrant groups (Singer, 2004).

While the local public schools and police departments are already working to develop linguistic competency and cultural sensitivity, largely because of federal requirements, these bureaucratic institutions, as well as city hall, could benefit from local and regional collaboratives that organize and disseminate local knowledge about what works well when serving new immigrants. Additionally, intentional partnerships should be developed between immigrant and ethnic community groups and the local political apparatus to provide information to new arrivals about services and goods in a familiar linguistic and cultural setting. Such an arrangement would likely help ease the integration of immigrant newcomers in non-traditional gateway cities (Singer, 2004).

**Promote Civic Engagement**

The active participation of new immigrants in civic and community life is a key goal of integration. Civic engagement may mean involvement in the public schools, partaking in a community activity to clean up their neighborhood, or attending a neighborhood meeting. Or, it could be preparing to become a U.S. citizen, voting, or being elected to a political office.
However, before new immigrants are likely to become involved in their communities, they must feel welcome and know where to turn for help.

While the civic engagement of a new immigrant is often viewed as an individual-level process, the local political institution can play a critical role in promoting civic engagement amongst new immigrants (Singer, 2004). This may be accomplished by providing translation at community meetings where all residents, regardless of nativity status, can collaborate on local issues such as public safety, public space and parks, sports teams, and schools. Local government can also partner with local ethnic organizations to assist new immigrants in filling out tax forms, applying for naturalization, and “get out the vote” drives. Local government can also support the local political inclusion of new immigrants by recruiting bilingual poll workers, distributing voting instruction cards in multiple languages, and hosting new citizen voter education events. Such outreach activities would help to both politically mobilize and welcome new immigrants.

*Create Inclusive Methods of Communication*

One of the easiest ways to feel excluded is to never receive information. In much of local government, the systems of communication are exclusive and flawed; to know things is to know someone with power. Most elected officials had few strategies to reach out to their constituents, so information about community issues or meetings was often available to those already politically connected. At the institutional-level, cities could overcome this flawed system through the creation of a centralized database of contact information for community organizations, churches, and other non-profits. Such a database could be a means to then communicate with a broader array of the population.
In Lowell, a database like this was constructed by the mayor’s administrative assistant. This was a self-initiated strategy to better communicate with the community and not an institutional-level plan. Additionally, while this is the second administration that this particular administrative assistant is working for, typically the transfer of power results in the loss of such strategic patterns of communication. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a city-wide database that is shared across multiple levels of management and is not tied to a particular administration.

In Brockton, the local police claimed to have a similarly extensive database of non-profits and religious organizations. However, all the religious and immigrant community leaders I interviewed were unaware of any communication ever received from such a source. In fact, any communication from the city of Brockton was so rare that the couple of instances it did occur were memorable.

The public schools were often cited as the best source for community news – though you had to be a parent to be included. Information is regularly distributed via flyers sent home or parent e-mail lists. Two elected officials cited the public schools as their main source for community news. However, this type of news is generally about community events or sports teams, not about access to community programs like city-sponsored first time homebuyer or home renovation programs.

Cities could also enhance their communication by improving the quality of their city’s website. Often the websites are dated and there is no centralized information about community programs. Obtaining such information should not be a struggle. Many traditional gateways have a “welcome packet” for new residents that provides basic community information, like trash pickup schedules and services offered by local non-profits. The development of such packets in new gateway cities in the dominant local languages could serve as an opportunity for inclusion.
Areas of Future Study

While this research provides an initial look into the way New England’s new gateway communities are politically incorporating new immigrants, further research is merited in four key areas. First, are there additional factors or conditions that shape the political inclusion of immigrants in a new gateway community? Additionally, an empirical analysis that can better demonstrate the effects of an immigrant group’s demographics on their level of inclusion would be beneficial.

Second, would street-level bureaucrats support the above proposals for inclusivity? City Hall employees, police officers, and public education administrators exercise substantial discretion in their daily work and in how they respond to the person in front of them (Lipsky 1980; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2003; Williams, 2015). A deeper understanding of how frontline employees exercise discretion and implement inclusive service will enhance our understanding of street-level bureaucracy and how leaders and institutional-level policies influence subordinates. If there is uneven buy-in from street-level bureaucrats for implementing more inclusive policies, the success of such policies is going to be limited. Thus, additional observations of interactions between street-level bureaucrats and immigrants would provide a more realistic analysis of inclusion in practice.

Third, what demographic, institutional, and cultural factors might create conditions where elected officials seek to politically mobilize new immigrants? Additionally, which conditions might promote the activation of inclusionary or exclusionary stances toward new immigrants among politicians?

Finally, how might undocumented immigrants be politically incorporated in new gateway cities? Does the level of inclusion depend on exactly when they arrive, where they are from, and
precisely where they settle? And, in what ways does the local and national political climate on immigration issues effect the inclusion process? While the local police said that a community member’s immigration status was irrelevant to the way they police, how might that change based on the demographics of the local immigrant community?
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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Below are the questions used to guide the interview process. As this is merely a guide, additional questions or topics came up during conversation and may not be reflected in these questions.

For Elected Officials:

Communication

1. How do you learn about the needs of immigrants in the community?

2. Do you think citizens should self-advocate or are there ways that you seek out their concerns? Are there any special ways you do this with the immigrant communities?

3. Who would you contact or reach out to if you wanted to proactively reach the immigrant communities in [Brockton or Lowell].

4. In what ways have you/ might you change your outreach strategies during election years?

5. Are you aware of any city documents routinely translated into the dominant local languages? If so, which ones? If not, has there been any discussion about doing so? What barriers prevent it? Would documents be translated upon request?

6. In what ways has [Brockton or Lowell] specifically considered the needs of your immigrant constituents? E.g., have there been any efforts to diversify the staff of city hall? Is diversity a consideration in appointments to local boards? How is important information disseminated to the immigrant communities?

7. In what ways do you think [Brockton or Lowell] is meeting the needs of its immigrant communities? In what ways might it improve?
8. Can you think of any particular groups or individuals that represent immigrant needs that are influential in helping to impact policy or decision making here in [Brockton or Lowell]? What types of concerns do they champion?

9. Can you think of any policies or rules that were drafted in response to issues amongst immigrant groups? Or any action taken to specifically better incorporate the immigrant community?

Designation of Local Resources

10. Are you aware of any local resources that have been designated to specifically aid the local immigrant communities? If so, what funds? If not, why

11. What would you identify as [Brockton or Lowell’s] priorities? How might these include the immigrant communities? Are any of these goals precipitated by the immigrant communities?

Local Policing Strategies

12. Are you aware of any particular concerns the [Lowell or Brockton] police force has in regards to their interactions with local immigrant communities?

13. Has city council placed any diversity requirements on the police force in regards to hiring?
For Non-Elected City Hall Employees:

1. Are there any bilingual employees in your department?

2. Are you aware of any efforts to try to diversify your department?

3. Have you been given any training on how to accommodate immigrant constituents with limited English proficiency?

4. Are there any translation services available upon request?

5. Are any documents or forms you use in your department routinely translated into other languages or available upon request?

6. How often do you interact with immigrant constituents?

7. How would you describe your experiences when working with immigrant constituents? Any successes? Any frustrations?

For Public School Employees:

1. What is the history of bilingual education in this city?

2. What does this city do well at in regards to meeting the needs of new immigrants? What are currently the greatest areas for improvement?

3. Are teachers and/or staff given any training on how to accommodate new immigrant families in this city? (e.g. cultural competency training)
4. Are there any particular procedures for how teachers in Brockton interface with parents and/or children with limited English proficiency? If so, do you find these procedures to be effective? If not, what do you feel would be the ideal procedure?

5. What translation services are available for students and/or parents? And are there any translation services available upon request?

6. Are any documents or forms you use in your department routinely translated into other languages or available upon request?

7. Are any of the services you provide mandated by the State? Which ones are this city’s way of innovating in order to meet the needs of the local population?

8. Generally, who dreams up and implements new programs that meet the needs of this city’s new immigrants? In what ways, if any, do local elected officials (e.g. the mayor or the school committee) provide vision or guidance?

9. Overall, do you feel adequately equipped to meet the needs of new immigrants in this community? If not, what change(s) would help you to better meet the needs of new immigrants?

10. Funding Questions

   a. Are decisions on funding for ELLs made at the federal, state, or local level? How does that work?

11. School Committee Questions

   a. Why do you think the school committee doesn’t reflect the population of the city?

   b. Are any particular committee members more supportive of the immigrant community?
For Police Officers:

1. Are there any bilingual police officers in your department?
2. Are you aware of any efforts to try to diversify this police department?
3. Have you been given any training on how to accommodate immigrant constituents with limited English proficiency?
4. What are the official procedures if you encounter a citizen or person-of-interest with limited English proficiency?
5. Do you have any particular strategies you rely on when interacting with immigrants?
6. Do you feel your interactions with immigrant community members are any different than with native-born residents? If so, how is it different?
7. Are there any particular issues that tend to increase your involvement with the immigrant communities? If so, what types of issues?
8. Are you aware of any local policing partnerships that have been attempted with the local immigrant communities?
9. How and in what situations do you comply with Secure Communities?
For Community Leaders:

1. How would you describe your personal encounters with local government here in [Brockton or Lowell]?

2. How would you characterize the interactions you have heard concerning members of the immigrant community?

3. Are you aware of any translation services available at City Hall?

4. Have you ever received any communication from City Hall in a language other than English?

5. Have any elected officials ever reached out to you? If so, what was the nature of those interactions?

6. Have you ever contacted a local elected official with any needs or concerns? If so, how was that interaction? If not, why not?
APPENDIX B: REFLECTIONS ON ACCESS

Gaining access in both Lowell and Brockton was significantly harder than anticipated. I, perhaps naively, believed that initiating contact with a local elected official would be relatively easy. My initial strategy was to utilize e-mail to initiate contact. Northeastern University’s Institutional Review Board approved both e-mail and phone recruitment scripts. However, as discussed in Chapter Four, when I was ready to request interviews, I discovered that only one elected official in Lowell had published contact information on the city’s website. While Lowell does have a web-based contact form that claims it will send the correspondence to the selected elected officials, I received only one response from this form (from the Mayor’s administrative assistant). In Brockton, phone numbers and city-issued e-mail addresses are available on the city’s website. However, my e-mails largely went unanswered and phone calls went straight to voicemail.

Since I could not ascertain that actual contact had been made and that the lack of response was a declination of my request for an interview, I started pursuing other means of communication. While frustrating, this, in itself, is an interesting finding about the functioning of local government. As a researcher with significantly more time and resources than an average citizen, especially a new immigrant whom may have limited English proficiency, this level of accessibility to elected officials is unacceptable. I subsequently spent hours sleuthing the internet for alternative contact information via personal websites and social media, often with limited success.

In Brockton, where I conducted 33 percent more interviews, my initial e-mails resulted in interviews with just two elected officials – both of whom are ethnic minorities and had a
particular interest in my research. Additional interviews with elected officials in Brockton were only obtained following a face-to-face appeal to elected officials as a taxpayer in their city.
While I no longer reside in Brockton, I could relate to interviewees through my experience as a former resident of the city. Additionally, I was able to demonstrate an enduring connection to the city through my continued ownership and rental of a two-family home. I strongly believe this was critical to my access in Brockton. However, even though this appeal to my former residence in Brockton was a part of my recruitment script in e-mails and phone calls to elected officials, these forms of communication went unanswered. So, while my tangible connection to the city was important, it still required a face-to-face encounter.

After I successfully completed two interviews with elected officials in Brockton but failed to initiate contact with others, I started attending city council and finance committee meetings to introduce myself in person. This in-person appeal to my connection to the city was much more successful. Additionally, my attendance at these meetings often resulted in the councilors I had already interviewed offering to do personal introductions of me to other councilors I had not yet interviewed. After my continual presence at these meetings, councilors with whom I had built rapport would use informal social control to urge other councilors into to schedule an interview. Some examples of this informal social control would be a councilor whom I had already interviewed introducing me to another elected official with whom I wished access by stating, “this poor lady has to keep showing up at these meetings because you won’t bother to call her back” or “this lady has been to so many meetings she should run for office so she at least gets paid for showing up. Schedule an interview now so she doesn’t have to come anymore.”
In Lowell, as well as with a key interviewee in Brockton, most of my access to elected officials was gained through an appeal to my connections with immigrant community leaders. In both Lowell and Brockton, the immigrant community leaders quickly responded to my request for an interview via e-mail. As part of the interview protocol with these immigrant community leaders, I asked whether there were any particular elected officials they tended to approach first about city-level problems. Again, like in Brockton, participant-observation at community events and city council meetings was critical to my success in scheduling interviews with elected officials. However, instead of an appeal to a personal connection to the city (since I had none in Lowell), I would earn interviews with my first elected officials in Lowell by, in face-to-face contact, noting them that their name was mentioned as a person whom the immigrant community would contact first and I was interested in why they thought they were mentioned. These elected officials were flattered by this and were much more interested in talking. This tactic resulted in three of my interviews with Lowell elected officials and one with a Brockton elected official.

The public spaces in which city council meetings occur may also have impacted my greater access to Brockton elected officials. In Brockton, there are no physical barriers between the public and the elected officials. In Lowell, the council chambers have a railing separating the public from the elected officials. Additionally, in Lowell, there is a private space through which most of Lowell’s elected officials enter and leave the council chambers. So when trying to initiate contact at these meetings, I would have to approach the barrier immediately at the end of a Lowell council meeting in hopes of attracting the attention of prospective interviewees before they exited through the side door. This method resulted in me attracting the attention of the City Manager, who instructed his assistant to schedule a meeting with me for the following week. After attendance at several of these meetings, Lowell’s City Clerk noticed me, and after
explaining to him my dilemma, offered to just give me the direct private contact information for all the elected officials. Again, these significant barriers to accessing local elected officials is troubling.

My expectations for how I would achieve interviews with city hall employees also did not match reality. After no response to my request for formal interviews via e-mail, I ended up conducting informal interviews during normal work hours. I went to city hall and would observe the interactions of the staff with constituents and then, when not busy, approach the employees of a department with my questions. In a few instances, an employee would be uncomfortable with my questions and summon the manager of the department. In all interactions I identified myself as a researcher and explained my research before asking questions.

I found that the presence of my children, ages 3 and 5 at the time of the research, were an asset in making city hall employees more comfortable. They were much friendlier and willing to answer questions when I had them in tow. I assume my children’s presence humanized me. On one occasion, when I found out last minute about a public hearing on the distribution of Community Development Block Grant funds in Brockton, I had no choice but to bring my children if I wanted attend. As the only members of the public in attendance, at the end of the meeting, a person whom I had attempted to reach via e-mail on several occasions, asked who we were and why we were there. At that point, my three-year-old responded, “I’m helping my Mama become a doctor!” After that encounter, this person immediately scheduled a formal interview with me for later that week.

While it is possible that my status as a researcher made prospective interviewees less responsive to me than they would be to a constituent, the lack of access to even the most basic
contact information is still unacceptable. The interviews ultimately gained were the result of persistence, sleuthing, and creativity.