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Immigrants, Politics, and Local Response in Suburban Washington

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"Municipalities across the country confront tough choices as they undergo rapid change due to immigration."

Findings

Following the failure of national immigration reform in 2006 and 2007, local leaders in many areas with fast-growing immigrant populations stepped in to address the issue, capturing media and public attention with scores of proposed immigration-related ordinances. A case study of the local, regional, and, ultimately, national factors that led Prince William County—an outer suburb of Washington, DC emblematic of the trend—to adopt new policies towards unauthorized immigrants finds:

- **Prince William County, VA has experienced rapid population growth and dynamic change.** The county's total population more than doubled between 1980 and 2006, while its immigrant population swelled to more than 14 times its 1980 size. Between 2000 and 2006, Prince William's Hispanic population tripled in size, making it one of the nation's top counties for Latino growth.

- **Housing and jobs drove population growth in Prince William County, drawing newcomers from around the region and the nation, including immigrants.** Relatively stable during the 1990s, home prices in the Washington region soared from 2000 to 2005; job growth and decentralization made farther-flung suburbs like Prince William County more affordable than those in the inner core.

- **Long-time residents—particularly in older neighborhoods where many Hispanic newcomers concentrated—perceived a decline in their quality of life and feared a drop in property values due to visible signs of neglect and overcrowding.** Simultaneously, rapid population growth countywide resulted in challenges typical to fast-growing communities: traffic congestion, crowded schools, and heavy demand on public services.

- **Community leaders and residents successfully organized to pressure county government to crack down on illegal immigration.** Passed without a public hearing or sufficient investigation of the potential consequences, the new legislation ordered police to check residency status of lawbreakers and enter into a cooperative agreement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It also mandated the denial of business licenses and certain county social services to unauthorized immigrants.

- **In addition to swift demographic change, several other factors contributed to Prince William County's role at the forefront of a movement toward restrictionist policymaking on immigration.** Federal immigration debates, an unprepared local government, lack of service infrastructure for immigrants, heightened political pressure due to local election campaigning, and media attention contributed to the environment that led to the groundbreaking legislation.

Changes in public policy in Prince William County have come at a time of peak interest in immigrants in communities across the United States. They have also come at a moment of financial crisis and economic anxiety. Municipalities across the country confront tough choices in addressing the challenges they face as they undergo rapid change due to immigration.

Introduction

The United States experienced a great wave of immigration during the late 1990s and first half of the current decade. During that period, immigrants—both legal and unauthorized— found opportunities in many more cities, suburbs, and rural areas than the recent past when they concentrated in just a handful of states and cities. The result is a new geography of immigration which now includes many places that have little history of immigration.

Immigration debates—in recent decades limited to certain states such as California and New York—have spread along with the residential distribution of immigrants. Many new destinations were unprepared for the influx of newcomers that the most recent wave of immigration brought. Some municipalities are grappling with the social changes and the fiscal impact of new streams of immigrants, which can be contentious. At the same time, the nation has been in a holding pattern on major immigration reform, after several years of acrimonious congressional debate. However, a new administration led by President Barack Obama faces a renewed drive for immigration reform, albeit tempered by an immense economic downturn. Nonetheless, there is mounting urgency among states and localities to manage immigration and its associated costs, particularly illegal immigration. Localities have responded in varying ways, some with restrictive actions and others with inclusive provisions.

Virginia has been at the vanguard among states in the number of pieces of legislation introduced, the majority of which are designed to be restrictive of immigrants, particularly unauthorized immigrants.[1] However, animosity toward unauthorized immigrants tends to be localized, and few of the state bills have made it into law. Indeed, in preceding years, two high-profile Virginia candidates that campaigned with a hard-line approach toward immigration lost political races: Republican Jerry Kilgore lost the governor's seat to Tim Kaine in 2005, and George Allen in a 2006 Senate re-election bid narrowly lost to Democrat James Webb.

Instead, local measures have had more success, with Prince William County—an outer suburb of the nation's capital—emerging as an important focal point. Though there have been anti-immigrant flare ups across the Washington region, they have usually centered around day labor issues.[2] In Prince William County, a sense of urgency developed to "do something" to control what some county residents perceived as an invasion of unauthorized immigrants.[3]

Starting with a December 2006 directive that mandated county staff to calculate the total cost of providing services to unauthorized immigrants, the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) of Prince William County has repeatedly introduced and revised policies aimed at the unauthorized population (see Box 1). The November 2007 BOCS election campaign produced an outpouring of anti-illegal-immigrant rhetoric and intense pressuring of candidates for local offices to take a stand against illegal immigration. County leaders portrayed the presence of unauthorized immigrants as an affront to the rule of law and a public safety issue above all. "What part of illegal don't you understand?" became a slogan for those running for office.

Together, officials and residents used legal status to frame their words and actions against immigrants. In July 2007, the BOCS unanimously passed a resolution that ordered local police to check the residency status of those in violation of county or state law if there was "probable cause" to believe they were present illegally. It also required county staff to deny certain public benefits to those unable to prove legal residency. Over the course of 10 months, the policy underwent revisions that resulted in a more moderate enforcement strategy, but the message of the initial crackdown had immediate and lasting effects.

There were local precedents for restrictive policies. In August 2005, Herndon, VA (in adjacent Fairfax County) attracted national attention when it approved a publicly-funded day labor center despite protests by many residents. Less than a year later, Herndon voters ousted the mayor and council members who supported the day labor center and elected new leaders who proceeded to shut it down. In December 2005, Manassas, an independent city located within Prince William County, passed an ordinance restricting the definition of "family" as a means of addressing residential overcrowding among immigrants. A month later, it was repealed under pressure from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and residents.

But municipalities in Virginia were not the first to take measures against a perceived incursion of unauthorized immigrants. Other places around the country—typically smaller municipalities that

experienced rapid growth in their immigrant populations—made similar decisions. Hazleton, PA was the first jurisdiction to draw national attention for its restrictive policies toward immigrants, passing the "Illegal Immigration Relief Act" in the summer of 2006. One of the first of its kind, this law prohibited renting to or hiring of unauthorized immigrants. This law served as a model for other jurisdictions looking for ways to deflect illegal immigration. In July 2007, a federal judge ruled against the ordinance on the grounds that only the federal government can regulate immigration. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia heard the case on Oct. 31, 2008 but has yet to rule. Other municipalities have also passed similarly restrictive laws. Another notable case is Farmer's Branch, TX, in which voters first passed an ordinance to fine landlords who rent to unauthorized immigrants in November 2006. However, the constitutionality of the ordinance was successfully challenged as were two subsequent versions.

While the wave of restrictive immigration policymaking in Prince William seemed to have emerged with little forewarning, its origins came over a long period marked by intense demographic change.

The Washington region experienced an economic and population boom in the 1990s and early 2000s. Faced with skyrocketing home prices, longer-term residents and newcomers alike settled farther out from the District of Columbia in search of affordable homes, good schools, and safe neighborhoods. During the past several decades, the region has rapidly grown and suburbanized and now encompasses 22 local jurisdictions in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, as well as the city of the District of Columbia.[4] Prince William County has epitomized this growth and change.

Simultaneously, in the last three and a half decades, the Washington, DC metropolitan area emerged as a major immigrant gateway. Many know the region as a cosmopolitan place that prides itself on racial and ethnic diversity, a thriving knowledge-based economy, and relative affluence. As such, the Washington region generally has been characterized as a welcoming place for immigrants and refugees from all over the world. The region's one million immigrants now make up a fifth of a population that was nearly entirely native-born in 1970. Among all metropolitan areas in the United States, Washington now ranks seventh for its number of immigrants.

In this paper, we focus on Prince William County, VA, and describe the metamorphosis of the county within a rapidly transforming metropolitan area. Prince William County's immigration policy is recognized as one of the most strict enforcement strategies in the nation and has attracted much attention from national and local media. At its root is the confluence of population growth, demographic change, and economic development combined with politics, grass-roots activism, and media attention.

Data and Methods

Using both quantitative and qualitative data, we examine the demographic, political, economic, and social trends that led up to the passing of the July 2007 immigration resolution in Prince William County. We also explain the revisions to the policy over the ensuing months and the consequences that the crackdown has had on the county.

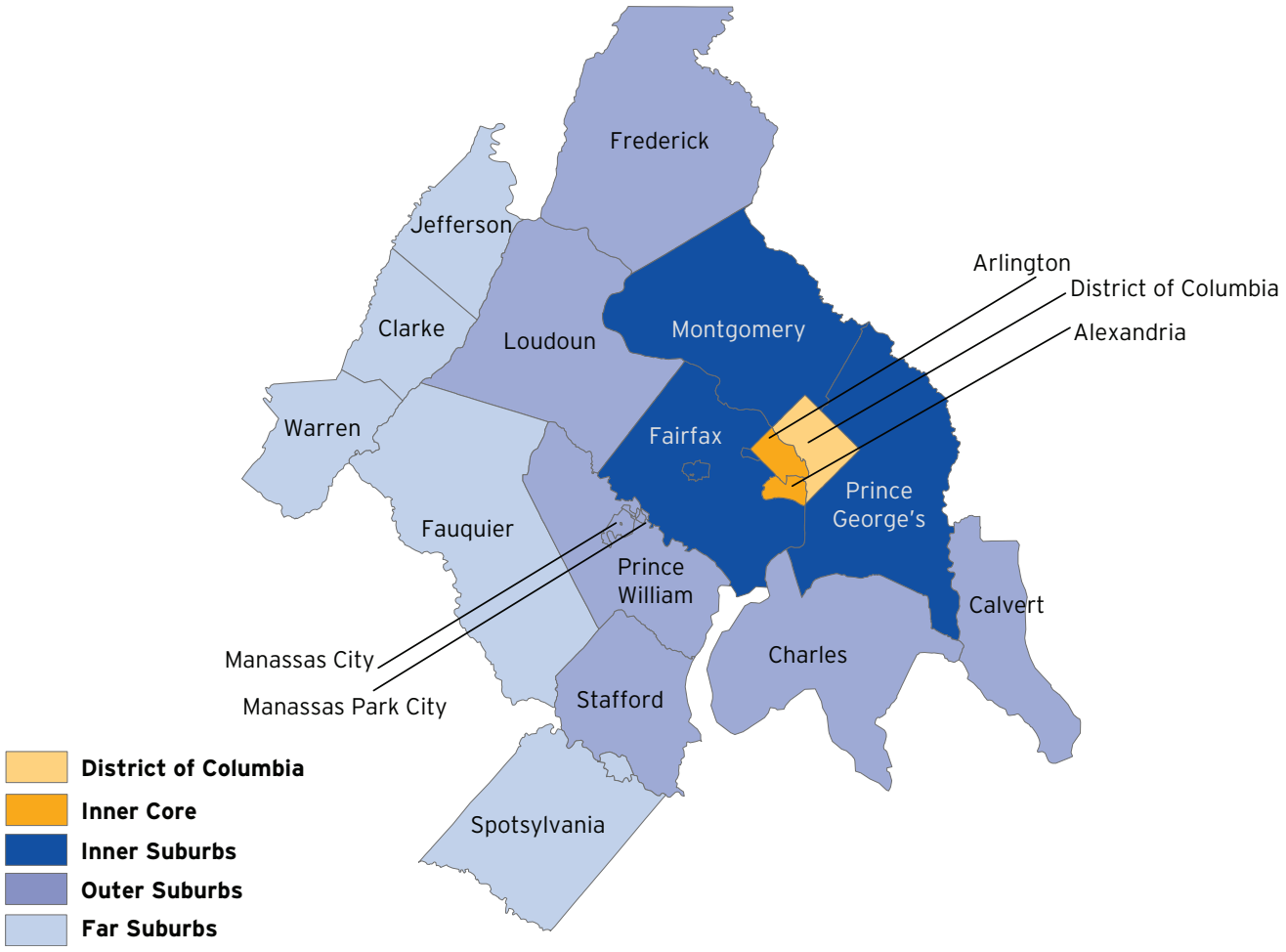
Quantitative Analysis of Growth and Settlement Trends

Data Sources

Our quantitative analysis of the growth and settlement trends in the Washington region (and Prince William County in particular) uses Census Bureau data from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses, as well as the 2006 American Community Survey (ACS). For the 2006 ACS data, we test for statistically significant differences between Prince William County and other jurisdictions. We also test for statistically significant changes between 2000 and 2006 for all jurisdictions. Except where otherwise noted on the tables, these differences are significant at the 90 percent confidence level, as are any additional differences we describe in the text. We use the Census Bureau's Population Estimates data for annual population change in Prince William County from 1990 to 2007 and for growth in Hispanic population between 2000 and 2006 in U.S. counties.

Since there are no Census data currently available for detailed geographies below the county level after 2000, we use Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data from 1997 to 2006 to examine the

Map 1. The Washington Metropolitan Area



Source: Brookings classification of the Washington Metropolitan Area as defined by the Office of Management and Budget Metropolitan Area, 2003

income levels and race/ethnicity of those receiving home purchase loans at the census-tract or Census Designated Place (CDP) level.[5] We also use data from Prince William County schools to examine enrollment in English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) programs to review change in the total school district's ESOL enrollment from September 1990 to September 2007 and to better understand post-2000 change at the neighborhood level.

We review employment and housing market trends in the Washington region and Prince William County. We use the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), a Bureau of Labor Statistics survey, to review total employment from 1990 to 2006 and super-sector employment among private establishments in 2006. To examine housing starts in the county, we use U.S. Census Bureau data on new privately-owned housing units authorized by building permits from 1990 to 2006. We also use data from the Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc. (MRIS) to review home purchases sales and prices from 1999 to 2006—the period of the Washington region's housing boom. Much of the MRIS data used is reported in appendices from the Fannie Mae Foundation and Urban Institute publication, *Housing in the Nation's Capital 2007.*

Geography

We use the terms "Washington region," "Washington metro," and "Washington area" interchangeably to refer to the 2007 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definition of the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV metropolitan statistical area. This definition includes the District of Columbia, five counties in Maryland, 15 counties and cities in Virginia, and one county in West Virginia.[6] For analytical and presentation purposes, we aggregate these jurisdictions into five areas: the District of Columbia, the inner core, the inner suburbs, the outer suburbs, and the far suburbs (see Map 1). Our analysis focuses on the outer suburb of Prince William County, VA. Although the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park are geographically surrounded by Prince William County, our analysis treats them separately since they are independent entities with their own governments.[7]

Terminology

This report uses data from the US Census Bureau to examine settlement trends by three different, but related, demographic characteristics: nativity, birthplace, and race/ethnicity. We analyze data from the Census Bureau on the foreign-born population (nativity). We use "foreign born" and "immigrant" interchangeably to refer to anyone born outside the United States who was not a U.S. citizen at birth. This population includes naturalized citizens, legal permanent residents, temporary migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and, to the extent to which they are counted, unauthorized immigrants.[8] In some places in the analysis, we isolate immigrants from the major sending region of Latin America (birthplace), which include all those born in Central America, South America, the Caribbean, or Mexico, regardless of language spoken, heritage, or race/ethnicity. Finally, where appropriate, we present data on race and ethnicity, a measure that does not take into account immigration status. The race/ethnic groups we present are mutually exclusive, such that all Hispanics are aggregated and the other groups (white, black, Asian, other) represent people of non-Hispanic ethnicity.

While race/ethnicity, nativity, and birthplace are separate characteristics, we present data on all three categories because they are often undifferentiated in the public's view. In Prince William County, half of all immigrants are Hispanic compared to only one-third of the metropolitan area's immigrants. Likewise, immigrants from Latin America represent 54 percent of the county's foreign-born population compared to 39 percent in the Washington metro area. At the same time, the proportion of Hispanics in Prince William County who are foreign-born is 58 percent, statistically the same as that for the Washington metropolitan area.

Qualitative Analysis of Debate Surrounding the Immigration Policy

We followed the events in Prince William County as they unfolded. We reviewed local and national media coverage of the resolution and other immigration-related stories, including newspaper articles, columns, blogs, and the interactive YouTube documentary, *9500Liberty*.[9] We witnessed Board of County Supervisor (BOCS) meetings, sometimes by video provided by *9500Liberty* and sometimes by live audio via the BOCS website.[10] These meetings included extensive "Citizens Time" during which residents and others voiced opinions both for and against board actions. We reviewed documents from BOCS, the police department, and the county executive's office regarding immigration policies of the county. We toured the county, especially the neighborhoods in the Manassas area with the highest immigrant growth. We interviewed residents, members of community-based organizations, business and community leaders, and county officials from BOCS, the police department, the Neighborhood Services Division, and the school district.

Findings

A. Prince William County has experienced rapid population growth and dynamic change. The Washington metropolitan area has experienced high population growth over the past 25 years, fueled by its strong job market. Between 1980 and 2006, when the United States population grew by 32 percent, the metro area's total population increased by 56 percent. By 2005, the Washington area had the fourth largest number of jobs and the eighth largest population of all metro areas in the nation.[11]

Population growth has been uneven across the region, and metropolitan Washington, like other fast-growing immigrant gateways, has seen higher growth rates in the suburbs (Table 1a).[12] Between 1980 and 2006, the District of Columbia, which is geographically small compared to many other jurisdictions in the area, lost total population but saw a relatively moderate increase in its immigrant population. Over this period, the *inner core* of the metro area (the Virginia jurisdictions of Arlington and Alexandria) grew by 32 percent overall, while the foreign-born population increased 137 percent (Table 1b). Most recently, between 2000 and 2006, the inner core actually lost immigrants, though their total population grew modestly. As a result, the city and inner core of the metropolitan area have

Table 1a. Total Population Change in the Washington Metropolitan Area by Jurisdiction, 1980-2006

	Total Population				Percent Change			
	1980	1990	2000	2006	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2006	1980-2006
District of Columbia	638,333	606,900	572,059	581,530	-4.9	-5.7	1.7	-8.9
Inner Core	255,816	282,119	317,736	336,750	10.3	12.6	6.0	31.6
Arlington County, VA	152,599	170,936	189,453	199,776	12.0	10.8	5.4	30.9
Alexandria city, VA	103,217	111,183	128,283	136,974	7.7	15.4	6.8	32.7
Inner Suburbs*	1,841,025	2,304,879	2,644,605	2,783,889	25.2	14.7	5.3	51.2
Montgomery County, MD	579,053	757,027	873,341	932,131	30.7	15.4	6.7	61.0
Prince George's County, MD	665,071	729,268	801,515	841,315	9.7	9.9	5.0	26.5
Fairfax County, VA	596,901	818,584	969,749	1,010,443	37.1	18.5	4.2	69.3
Fairfax city, VA	19,390	19,622	21,498	—	1.2	9.6	—	—
Falls Church city, VA	9,515	9,578	10,377	—	0.7	8.3	—	—
Outer Suburbs**	464,781	665,785	933,244	1,198,648	43.2	40.2	28.4	157.9
Loudoun County, VA	57,427	86,129	169,599	268,817	50.0	96.9	58.5	368.1
Prince William County, VA	**144,703**	**215,686**	**280,813**	**357,503**	**49.1**	**30.2**	**27.3**	**147.1**
Manassas city, VA	15,438	27,957	35,135	—	81.1	25.7	—	—
Manassas Park city, VA	6,524	6,734	10,290	—	3.2	52.8	—	—
Stafford County, VA	40,470	61,236	92,446	120,170	51.3	51.0	30.0	196.9
Calvert County, MD	34,638	51,372	74,563	88,804	48.3	45.1	19.1	156.4
Charles County, MD	72,751	101,154	120,546	140,416	39.0	19.2	16.5	93.0
Frederick County, MD	114,792	150,208	195,277	222,938	30.9	30.0	14.2	94.2
Total Washington Metropolitan Area***	3,397,935	4,122,914	4,796,183	5,288,670	21.3	16.3	10.3	55.6

"—" Data not available at smaller geographic levels

**subtotals for inner suburbs exclude independent cities of Fairfax and Falls Church*

***subtotals for outer suburbs exclude independent cities of Manassas and Manassas Park*

****totals for the metro area include the Far Suburbs, not listed on this table*

Sources: 1980 data from printed Census volumes

1990 data from Geolytics Census CD

2000 and 2006 data from American FactFinder

seen a leveling off in the proportion of their population that is foreign born (Table 2.)

The *inner suburban* counties of Fairfax, VA, and Montgomery and Prince George's, MD saw their total populations grow by 50 percent between 1980 and 2006, while their immigrant populations more than quadrupled (see Table 1). Fairfax and Montgomery counties have the largest foreign-born populations in the region, both with nearly 275,000 immigrants or respectively 27 percent and 29 percent of their total populations in 2006. Between 2000 and 2006, Prince George's County lost native-born population, but it had more immigrant growth than its larger neighbor, Montgomery County. Together, these inner suburban counties have seen the foreign-born share of their population rise from 9 percent in 1980 to 22 percent in 2000 to 25 percent in 2006.[13] (See Table 2.)

The most striking changes have occurred in the *outer suburbs*.[14] While the total population in the outer suburbs increased 158 percent between 1980 and 2006, the immigrant population grew to more than 14 times its 1980 level. Among outer suburban counties, Prince William and Loudoun experienced the fastest trajectories of growth and change during the period. Overall, the foreign-born share of the population dramatically increased in the outer suburbs from 2.6 percent in 1980 to 7.3 percent in 2000 to 14.2 percent in 2006. Once again, Prince William and Loudoun counties stood out, with the highest immigrant growth rates in the region (Table 2).

Table 1b. Foreign-Born Population Change in the Washington Metropolitan Area by Jurisdiction, 1980-2006

	Foreign-Born Population				Percent Change			
	1980	1990	2000	2006	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2006	1980-2006
District of Columbia	40,559	58,887	73,561	73,820	45.2	24.9	0.4	82.0
Inner Core	33,205	54,514	85,293	78,619	64.2	56.5	-7.8	136.8
Arlington County, VA	22,337	36,516	52,693	46,614	63.5	44.3	-11.5	108.7
Alexandria city, VA	10,868	17,998	32,600	32,005	65.6	81.1	-1.8	194.5
Inner Suburbs*	164,273	338,481	581,154	703,416	106.0	71.7	21.0	328.2
Montgomery County, MD	70,128	141,166	232,996	273,227	101.3	65.1	17.3	289.6
Prince George's County, MD	40,036	69,809	110,481	159,468	74.4	58.3	44.3	298.3
Fairfax County, VA	54,109	127,506	237,677	270,721	135.6	86.4	13.9	400.3
Fairfax city, VA	1,461	2,900	5,451	—	98.5	88.0	—	—
Falls Church city, VA	907	1,008	1,667	—	11.1	65.4	—	—
Outer Suburbs**	12,000	26,162	67,907	170,771	118.0	159.6	151.5	1323.1
Loudoun County, VA	1,840	4,880	19,116	56,378	165.2	291.7	194.9	2964.0
Prince William County, VA	**5,741**	**13,447**	**32,186**	**78,371**	**134.2**	**139.4**	**143.5**	**1265.1**
Manassas city, VA	460	2,129	4,973	—	362.8	133.6	—	—
Manassas Park city, VA	107	368	1,543	—	243.9	319.3	—	—
Stafford County, VA	734	1,833	3,713	9,625	149.7	102.6	159.2	1211.3
Calvert County, MD	515	847	1,643	1,856	64.5	94.0	13.0	260.4
Charles County, MD	1,441	2,082	3,470	5,104	44.5	66.7	47.1	254.2
Frederick County, MD	1,729	3,073	7,779	19,437	77.7	153.1	149.9	1024.2
Total Washington Metropolitan Area***	255,439	488,283	829,310	1,063,033	91.2	69.8	28.2	316.2

"—" Data not available at smaller geographic levels

**subtotals for inner suburbs exclude independent cities of Fairfax and Falls Church*

***subtotals for outer suburbs exclude independent cities of Manassas and Manassas Park*

****totals for the metro area include the Far Suburbs, not listed on this table*

Sources: 1980 data from printed Census volumes

1990 data from Geolytics Census CD

2000 and 2006 data from American FactFinder

Table 2. Percent Foreign Born in the Washington Metroplitan Area by Jursidiction, 1980–2006

	Percent Foreign Born			
	1980	**1990**	**2000**	**2006**
District of Columbia	6.4	9.7	12.9	12.7
Inner Core	13.0	19.3	26.8	23.3
Arlington County, VA	14.6	21.4	27.8	23.3
Alexandria city, VA	10.5	16.2	25.4	23.4
Inner Suburbs*	8.9	14.7	22.0	25.3
Montgomery County, MD	12.1	18.6	26.7	29.3
Prince George's County, MD	6.0	9.6	13.8	19.0
Fairfax County, VA	9.1	15.6	24.5	26.8
Fairfax city, VA	7.5	14.8	25.4	—
Falls Church city, VA	9.5	10.5	16.1	—
Outer Suburbs**	2.6	3.9	7.3	14.2
Loudoun County, VA	3.2	5.7	11.3	21.0
Prince William County, VA	**4.0**	**6.2**	**11.5**	**21.9**
Manassas city, VA	3.0	7.6	14.2	—
Manassas Park city, VA	1.6	5.5	15.0	—
Stafford County, VA	1.8	3.0	4.0	8.0
Calvert County, MD	1.5	1.6	2.2	2.1
Charles County, MD	2.0	2.1	2.9	3.6
Frederick County, MD	1.5	2.0	4.0	8.7
Total Washington Metropolitan Area***	7.5	11.8	17.3	20.1

"—" Data not available at smaller geographic levels

**subtotals for inner suburbs exclude independent cities of Fairfax and Falls Church*

***subtotals for outer suburbs exclude independent cities of Manassas and Manassas Park*

****totals for the metro area include the Far Suburbs, not listed on this table*

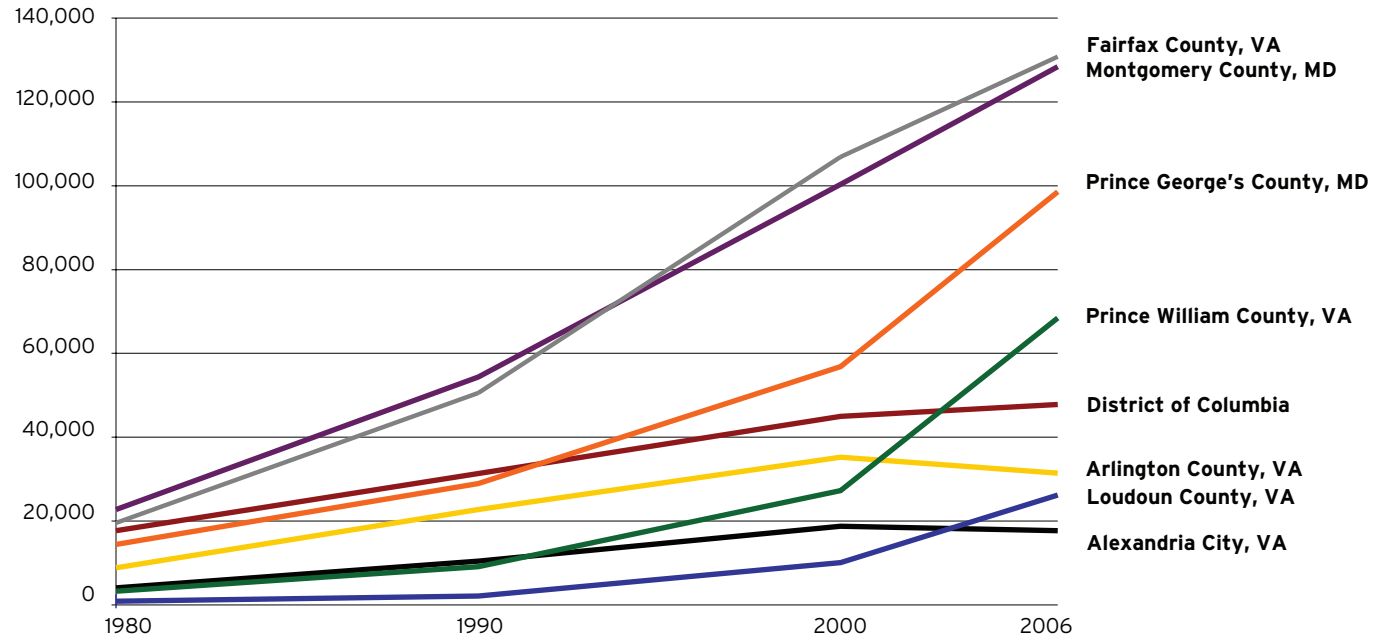
Sources: 1980 data from printed Census volumes
1990 data from Geolytics Census CD
2000 and 2006 data from American FactFinder

With a total population of over 357,000 in 2006, Prince William County has more than doubled since 1980 (Table 1a). Prince William was once perceived as a somewhat rural, Southern, "small-town" county. Though bedroom communities for Washington commuters started to crop up after World War II, Prince William's status as a full-fledged suburb of Washington is much more recent. Indeed, growth in the county has been particularly strong since 2000. With gains of over 11,000 residents each year, annual population increases from 2000 to 2005 were nearly double the annual average for the 1990s.[15]

Prince William's swift growth was accompanied by an increase in racial and ethnic diversity. From 87 percent in 1980, the non-Hispanic white share of the county's population fell to 52 percent in 2006. Hispanics accounted for 31 percent of Prince William County's total population growth over this period, outpacing both whites (28 percent) and blacks (25 percent). While Hispanics made up only 2 percent of the county's population in 1980, by 2006 they comprised 19 percent (Figure 1). Meanwhile, blacks made up 8 percent of the county's population in 1980, but grew to 19 percent by 2000 (and have held steady since).[16]

The majority of growth among the county's Hispanic population over the past quarter-century occurred from 2000 to 2006, putting Prince William among the top twelve counties in the nation. Five additional outer suburban counties in metropolitan Washington made the list for their Hispanic gains (Table 3).

Figure 1. Hispanic Population Change, 1980-2006



Sources: 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses; 2006 American Community Survey.

Table 3. Fastest-Growing Hispanic Counties, 2000-2006

			2000		2006		2000-2006
	County	**Metropolitan Area**	**Hispanics**	**% Hispanic**	**Hispanics**	**% Hispanic**	**% Change**
1	Frederick, VA	Winchester, VA-WV	1,005	1.7	3,782	5.3	276.3
2	Paulding, GA	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	1,432	1.7	4,700	3.9	228.2
3	Kendall, IL	Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI	4,178	7.6	12,695	14.4	203.9
4	Fauquier, VA	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	1,133	2.0	3,425	5.2	202.3
5	Spotsylvania, VA	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	2,576	2.8	7,152	6.0	177.6
6	Henry, GA	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	2,817	2.3	7,809	4.4	177.2
7	Luzerne, PA*	Scranton–Wilkes-Barre, PA	3,714	1.2	10,246	3.3	175.9
8	Newton, GA	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	1,170	1.9	3,147	3.4	169.0
9	Stafford, VA	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	3,411	3.6	9,102	7.6	166.8
10	Loudoun, VA	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	10,435	6.0	26,207	9.7	151.1
11	**Prince William, VA**	**Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV**	**27,714**	**9.8**	**68,415**	**19.1**	**146.9**
12	Frederick, MD	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	4,734	2.4	11,537	5.2	143.7
13	Lake, FL	Orlando, FL	12,081	5.7	28,487	9.8	135.8
14	Berkeley, WV	Hagerstown-Martinsburg, MD-WV	1,122	1.5	2,632	2.7	134.6
15	Rutherford, TN	Nashville-Davidson–Murfreesboro, TN	5,157	2.8	12,074	5.3	134.1

**includes the town of Hazelton, PA*

Authors' calculation of data for counties with at least 65,000 total population and 500 Hispanics in 2006

Source: Population Estimates, US Census Bureau

Several other counties shown in Table 3 have made headlines for local legislation aimed at immigrants. For example, Luzerne County in Pennsylvania is home to the city of Hazleton, the municipality with a landmark set of local ordinances targeting unauthorized immigrants. Kendall County is adjacent to Aurora IL, itself with one of the fastest growing Hispanic communities in the 1990s. Paulding, Henry and Newton counties in metropolitan Atlanta ring the core suburban settlement areas where immigrant gains were high in the 1990s.

Not surprisingly, examining population change by nativity shows similar trends. In 2006, 22 percent of Prince William's population was foreign born compared to only 12 percent just six years earlier (see Table 2). In 2006, immigrants from Latin America made up 54 percent of the foreign-born population, nearly double the proportion they made up in 1990 (28 percent).

Thus, Prince William County only recently and very quickly become a major immigrant destination in the region, with 78,000 foreign born residing there in 2006. While neighboring Fairfax and Montgomery counties experienced their fastest immigrant growth in the 1990s, Prince William's boom came after 2000. Between 2000 and 2006, Prince William County's immigrant population increased by two-and-a-half times the growth of the entire decade of the 1990s. In 2006, 22 percent of Prince William's population was foreign born compared to only 12 percent just six years earlier.

The geographical origins of immigrants in the county have also shifted. In 2006, immigrants from Latin America made up 54 percent of the foreign-born population, nearly double the proportion they made up in 1990 (28 percent). Over the same time period (1990–2006), the proportion of immigrants from Europe shrunk from 14 to 5 percent, and the Asian proportion decreased from 41 to 31 percent.[17] African immigrants have doubled their share, from 5 percent of immigrants in 1990 to 10 percent in 2006.

Prince William's share of the region's total immigrant population is also growing. As recently as 2000, Prince William County held only 4 percent of the Washington area's foreign-born residents and 5 percent of its Latin American immigrants even though it accounted for 6 percent of the total population. In 2006, however, the county held 7 percent of the metropolitan area's total population as well as 7 percent of its foreign-born population but had a disproportionate ten percent share of its Latin American immigrant population. In 2006 Prince William County surpassed the District of Columbia and Arlington, VA in its number of Latin American immigrants (more than 42,000) for the first time.

Immigrants moving to Prince William County are not all recent newcomers to the U.S. Rather, more established immigrants have moved out of the inner core to Prince William. For example, the inner-core county of Arlington had a higher-than-metro-average share of its immigrant population who entered the U.S. in the most recent period, 2000–2006 (41 percent), compared to 27 percent in Prince William County (Table 4). Conversely, 38 percent of Arlington's immigrant population present in 2006 entered the U.S. in the 1990s, while 66 percent of Prince William's did. According to journalistic accounts, affordable housing was a primary motivator for immigrants moving from the inner core to Prince William County.[18]

While rapid population growth and ethnic change have contributed to residents' sense of social upheaval, the characteristics of immigrants have also been influential in how people have reacted to their arrival. Less educated immigrants and those with lower English proficiency are generally perceived as more of a "burden to society" than highly educated, English-speaking immigrants. In Prince William County in 2006, more than half (55 percent) of immigrants had limited English proficiency (LEP), the highest in the region.[19] It could also be the case that the dominance of one non-English language in a county (combined with high levels of LEP) supports the perception of a foreign "invasion." In the entire Washington metro, half of the foreign-born LEP population speaks Spanish. Spanish speakers made up 70 percent of the immigrant LEP population in Prince William County in 2006, matched in the region only by Prince George's County, Maryland. However, immigrants in Prince George's County are more likely to speak English very well than those in Prince William County (Table 4).

Immigrants' education level is another characteristic that influences how local residents perceive their arrival. In Prince William County, immigrants are less likely to have high school degrees than immigrants in the metro area as a whole. While educational attainment of the native born is also lower in Prince William County than closer-in Virginia suburbs, the difference in high school graduation rates between native- and foreign-born residents is greatest in Prince William.

Table 4. Period of Entry, Language, and Educational Attainment Among Immigrants, 2006

	Percent of Immigrants who entered the U.S. between 2000 and 2006	Percent of Immigrants who are LEP	Percent of LEP Immigrants who Speak Spanish	Percent of Immigrants with Less than a HS Degree	Percent of Native Born with Less than HS Degree
District of Columbia	32.8	35.3	65.1[x]	25.9[x]	13.9
Inner Core	42.3	40.5	52.8	23.0	2.7
Arlington County, VA	40.7	33.0	60.9[x]	23.3[x]	2.3
Alexandria city, VA	44.8	51.1[x]	45.4	22.5[x]	3.2
Inner Suburbs[a]	29.9	43.4	44.5	18.5	5.3
Montgomery County, MD	29.4	41.9	38.1	16.6	3.8
Prince George's County, MD	35.2	36.9	69.8[x]	27.3[x]	9.4
Fairfax County, VA	27.4	48.7	38.6	15.4	3.0
Outer Suburbs[b]	27.1	46.3	57.7	21.1	6.9
Loudoun County, VA	28.2	41.8	40.3	15.8	3.6
Prince William County, VA	**26.6**	**55.0**	**70.0**	**29.1**	**5.7**
Stafford County, VA	24.5	30.6	63.7[x]	24.0[x]	6.9[x]
Calvert County, MD	9.5	11.9	—	8.8	8.0
Charles County, MD	22.2	15.0	0.0	11.8	10.7
Frederick County, MD	29.9	40.4	46.5	8.0	8.6
Total Washington Metropolitan Area[c]	30.9	43.3	49.7	20.2	7.2

"--" Data not available at smaller geographic levels

[x]not significantly different from Prince William County

[a]subtotals for inner suburbs exclude independent cities of Fairfax and Falls Church

[b]subtotals for outer suburbs exclude independent cities of Manassas and Manassas Park and, in the case of LEP immigrants who speak Spanish, Calvert County

[c]totals for the metro area include the Far Suburbs, not listed on this table

Source: ACS 2006 data from American FactFinder

The most controversial characteristic of immigrants in the Prince William County debate has been legal status. However, this is the trait for which data are least available, especially for smaller geographies like counties. The most widely used method of approximating the unauthorized population estimates that one-third of immigrants in both the Washington metropolitan area and the state of Virginia are in the United States illegally.[20]

B. Housing and jobs drove population growth in Prince William County, drawing newcomers from around the region and the nation, including immigrants.

Although direct evidence of motivations is sparse, data on housing and labor markets suggest that home ownership and job opportunities in Prince William and nearby counties have been major draws for immigrants and native-born residents alike.

Relatively stable during the 1990s, housing prices in the Washington metropolitan area soared from 2000 to 2005, with the median sales price doubling in many of the region's suburbs, even after adjusting for inflation. Squeezed by rising prices, many first-time homebuyers were willing to "drive to qualify," that is, move farther away from the urban core in order to find housing they could afford. Others, looking to upgrade, found newer, larger homes within their budget in farther flung suburbs—a trend that accelerated the development of "exurbs."[21] Indeed, at the height of the housing boom in 2005, the outer suburbs contained a third of all regional single-family home sales under $250,000 (affordable to a family with an income of $76,000).[22]

The county, however, was not immune to the region's skyrocketing housing prices (Table 5). In fact, the median sales price in Prince William County increased in real terms by 144 percent over this period.[23] Even with this tremendous increase, the median sales price in Prince William was significantly lower than those in other Northern Virginia jurisdictions, including Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church,

Table 5. Median Sales Price for Single-Family Homes and Condominiums in Northern Virginia, (2006$)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Alexandria	222,439	227,668	281,556	328,696	373,531	430,142
Arlington	255,512	284,585	336,187	374,713	437,565	515,097
Fairfax City	248,195	278,779	313,718	345,130	384,203	472,774
Fairfax County	244,683	270,925	308,171	345,130	410,884	494,653
Falls Church City	338,341	363,130	378,770	443,739	554,960	575,484
Loudoun	244,683	270,356	301,447	339,543	416,220	500,645
Manassas	140,020	162,783	190,500	221,322	266,808	335,484
Manassas Park	140,488	165,059	200,591	227,896	279,615	359,226
Prince William	**163,785**	**187,257**	**218,521**	**256,383**	**320,169**	**400,516**
Stafford	183,805	195,794	224,068	262,847	309,497	391,226

Source: Housing in the Nation's Capital, 2007

and Loudoun, strengthening Prince William's status as an affordable alternative. Two-thirds of Prince William's residents commute outside of the county for work, with a large number employed in places with more expensive housing like neighboring Fairfax County, as well as Washington, D.C. and Arlington.

Movement to the outer suburbs was also facilitated by regional job decentralization. The outer suburbs held 16 percent of the region's jobs by 2006—a substantial increase from their 1990 share. Not surprisingly, jobs in population-serving industries accompanied Prince William's population and housing boom. The number of jobs in Prince William County nearly doubled from 55,000 in 1990 to 104,000 in 2006. The overwhelming majority of the county's jobs are in the private sector. In 2006, the trade, transportation, and utilities super-sector accounted for the largest share of jobs (28 percent), the vast majority of which were in retail. Not surprising given the local housing boom, construction provided the second largest share of jobs in the county at 19 percent. Likewise, 14 percent of the county's jobs were in leisure and hospitality, heavily dominated by accommodations and food services. These sectors are more predominant in Prince William County than in any other Northern Virginia jurisdiction.[24]

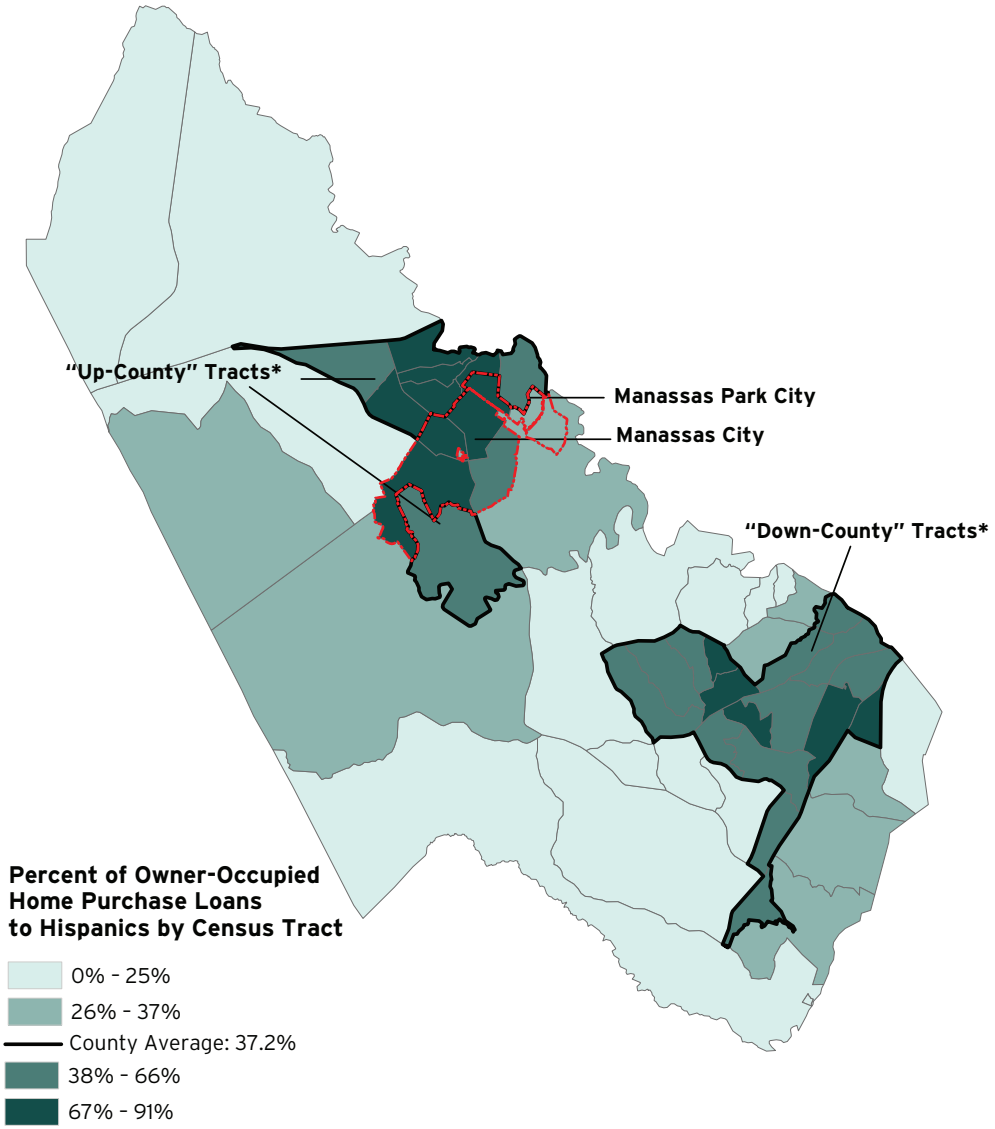
Combined with relatively affordable housing, the high proportion of jobs in these population-serving industries may have attracted immigrants, particularly Latin Americans, to Prince William County. Indeed, Census data from 2006 shows that Washington's Latin American immigrants are more heavily represented in these industries, particularly construction and leisure and hospitality.[25]

C. Long-time residents—particularly in older neighborhoods where many Hispanic newcomers concentrated—identified a decline in their quality of life and feared a drop in property values due to visible signs of neglect and overcrowding.

The county's rapid population changes resulted in challenges typical to fast-growing communities: traffic congestion, crowded schools, and heavy demand on public services. More subtly, but just as importantly, the character of these changes aroused anxiety among some of Prince William's long-time residents about the county's changing identity.

While incoming homebuyers of different income levels and races found housing to meet their needs in Prince William, they did not necessarily settle next-door to one another. Affluent, mostly white homebuyers moved into new and sometimes gated developments while many Latinos and other minorities with more moderate incomes bought homes in older neighborhoods.[26] Recent Hispanic settlement was particularly concentrated in two areas of the county—"up-county" neighborhoods contiguous to the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park, such as Bull Run, Sudley, Loch Lomond, Westgate, and Yorkshire, as well as "down-county" neighborhoods such as Dale City, Woodbridge, and parts of

Map 2. Percent of Owner Occupied Home Purchase Loans to Hispanics in Prince William County by Census Tract, 2006



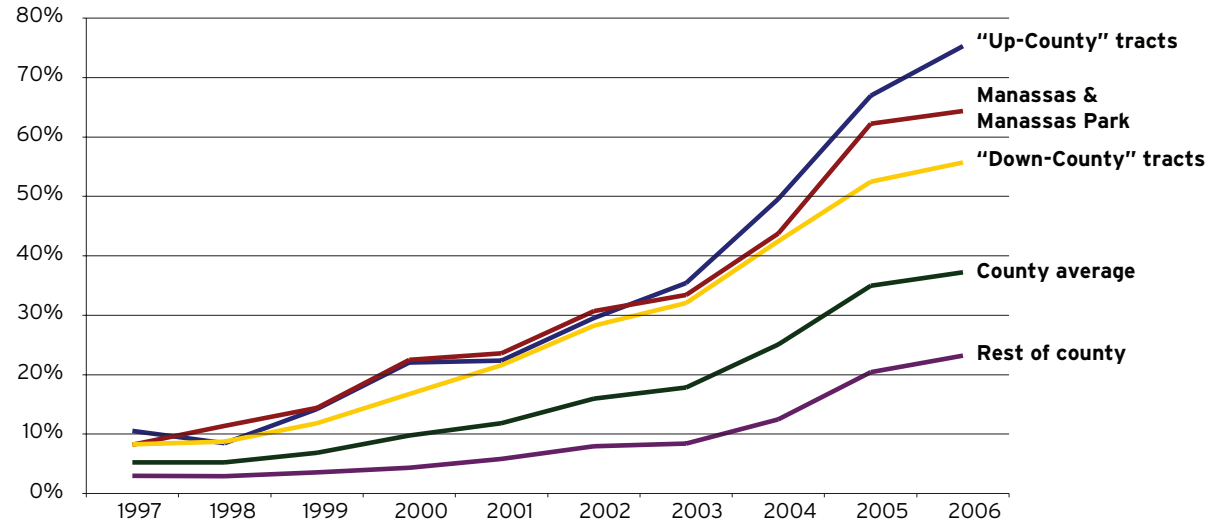
*"Up-County" and "Down'County" tracts are groups of Census tracts in the jurisdiction of Prince William County identified by the authors. In 2006, they had a higher rate of owner-occupied home purchase loans to Hispanics than the county rate of 37.2 percent.

Source: 2006 HMDA Data provided by DataPlace at www.dataplace.org

Dumfries, Triangle, and Lake Ridge.[27] The Hispanic share of owner-occupied home purchase loans in both of these areas was above the county average of 37 percent in 2006 (Map 2). Indeed, in the down-county neighborhoods, 56 percent of home purchase loans were made to Hispanics in 2006 compared to only 8 percent in 1997. Even more strikingly, three-quarters of 2006 home purchase loans in these up-county areas were to Hispanics, up from 11 percent just nine years earlier (Figure 2).

A change in the "feel" of older neighborhoods long inhabited by native-born residents accompanied these settlement patterns.[28] These differences included changes in outward appearance of houses and property (such as trash, debris, tall grass, parking on lawns, inoperative vehicles, and, on occasion, the

Figure 2. Percent of Owner-Occupied Home Purchase Loans to Hispanics, Prince William County and Manassas and Manassas Park cities, 1997–2006



Source: 2006 HMDA Data provided by DataPlace.

Note: "Up-County" and "Down-County" tracts are groups of Census tracts in the jurisdiction of Prince William County identified by the authors and shown on Map 2.

raising of chickens or corn), overcrowding as evidenced by multiple vehicles and the apparent presence of unrelated people sharing homes, more Spanish being spoken, less personal interaction among neighbors, increase in outdoor activities and noise levels, and in some cases, a rise in street crime, hit-and-run driving accidents, gang activity, and the appearance of graffiti.[29]

Without homeowners associations to turn to, residents in these older neighborhoods reported problems to the county's Property Code Enforcement (PCE) Group in the Neighborhood Services Division. Complaints jumped from 2,271 (128 of which were overcrowding complaints) in 2004 to 3,977 (460 of which were overcrowding complaints) in 2007. The PCE group could not keep up, even after adding more staff. In order for PCE to investigate overcrowding complaints, county staff must be granted permission by the resident to enter a home and must have evidence of unrelated individuals living together. Because of these constraints, most violations identified by PCE were not for overcrowding per se, but reflected symptoms thereof: outside storage, dump heaps, inoperative vehicles, and parking on lawns.[30] Nevertheless, PCE identified 57 occupancy violations in FY 2007 (up from five in FY 2004), which were clustered in the older neighborhoods identified above (both "up-county" and "down-county"). In all, there were more than 3,600 PCE violations in the county in 2007, compared to 972 in 2004.[31]

Initially, the Prince William County government was not equipped to respond to the soaring number of complaints, nor was it prepared to communicate with new residents who were often the target of such complaints. When Prince William's boom began in 2000, the county's property code enforcement group had five members—none of whom spoke Spanish. In response to a mounting number of complaints about community maintenance, the county doubled its property code enforcement staff and hired a neighborhood coordinator in 2005. By 2006, the county had formed the Neighborhood Services Division, which includes Property Code Enforcement, a litter and landscaping crew, and a single neighborhood coordinator; two of the staff spoke Spanish fluently. The county increased its staff responsible for enforcing property code and distributed compliance information in Spanish through radio, mail, and leaflet distribution. It did not, however, hire more neighborhood coordinators to expand education campaigns on property code compliance. PCE was still understaffed for the number of complaints it received, violations that were initially dealt with often recurred, and long-term residents

in older neighborhoods were frustrated by the lack of progress. Long-term residents resented the fact that the neighborhoods they had known and loved—and invested their money in—were showing signs of distress.

In addition, some long-term residents complained that their neighborhood schools were overcrowded (a phenomenon occurring throughout the county as a result of overall population growth) and that resources were being diverted to the growing number of English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students. ESOL enrollment in the Prince William County Schools experienced a 31-fold increase, growing from 421 students in September 1990 to 13,409 students in 2007. Further, the proportion of county students enrolled in ESOL increased from one percent in 1990 to 18 percent in 2007. The schools with the highest proportions of ESOL students are in many of the same neighborhoods that submitted complaints to PCE. Some residents associated these trends with the presence of unauthorized immigrants. In the 2007–2008 school year, 61 percent of the county's ESOL students were native-born (and therefore U.S. citizens), but it is not known what proportion of their parents were illegally present.

In essence, long-term residents of the affected areas perceived a decline in their quality of life and many expressed concerns about dropping property values. Some reacted by moving to the newly developed parts of the county where homes were more expensive and homeowners association rules prohibited many of the "blight" issues of the older neighborhoods. Others, whether because they liked where they lived, could not afford to move, or because they wanted to take a stand to preserve their former way of life, became politically active around the issue of immigration.

D. Community leaders and residents organized successfully to pressure county government to crack down on illegal immigration.

Faced with an initial tide of complaints, followed by increasingly organized demands for action, the County Supervisors first deferred responsibility to the federal government, but when Congress failed again to reform immigration policy in late 2006, pressure on local officials mounted. In December 2006, the BOCS directed staff to study the cost of and regulations regarding the provision of human services to unauthorized immigrants. A month later, county staff reported back on services legally available or unavailable to unauthorized immigrants.[32] In response to the Board's request for the total cost of illegal immigrants to the county, staff, noting the lack of data on the size of the unauthorized population among other methodological limitations, concluded "we cannot give you an accurate or dependable answer."[33]

Nevertheless, residents continued to pressure the Board to act, in part spurred by events in nearby Herndon where in the summer of 2005, the Town Council had authorized use of public funds for a day labor hiring site. Two grassroots organizations quickly formed in opposition: Help Save Herndon and the Herndon Minutemen. By May 2006, and in time for a local election, these groups had raised the visibility of the issue, the Town Council was voted out, and the center was subsequently closed.[34] Prince William County residents who had been told for years that immigration was the responsibility of the federal government alone felt empowered to work for change through their local government. They had to look no further than neighboring jurisdictions to find models of community organizing, and in March 2007, Help Save Manassas (HSM) was formed to "reduce the number of illegal aliens living in our community."[35]

Focusing on the legal status of immigrants provided a means to target the people seen as responsible for neighborhood decline, despite the absence of authoritative data on the size of the local unauthorized immigrant population. In the minds of some residents, it was obvious that the problems they were experiencing in their neighborhoods were associated with unauthorized immigration. Others acknowledged that legal status was secondary to behavior, but given the failure of property code enforcement, nevertheless focused on legal status as a more expeditious means to enact change. The organization grew quickly, from just forty members to over 1,500 members six months later.

In June 2007, John Stirrup, the county supervisor from the district encompassing some of the most heavily-impacted neighborhoods, and where many HSM members lived, introduced draft legislation to deny public services to unauthorized immigrants and mandate police checks of legal status for anyone caught breaking the law (see **Box 1**). By design, the legislation had not been previously discussed with the rest of the BOCS, and only a handful of people knew about it. These included the leaders of

Box 1. Prince William County Immigration Policy Timeline

Date	Action
December 12, 2006	**Board of County Supervisors Passes Directive 06-236:** • Directs staff to calculate the total cost of providing County Services to illegal immigrants
June 26, 2007	**John Stirrup introduces draft legislation for consideration and vote on July 10**
July 10, 2007	**Board of County Supervisors Unanimously Passes Resolution 07-609:** • Police directed to inquire about the immigration status of anyone detained for violating a state law or county ordinance, including a traffic violation, if there is probable cause to believe the person is violating federal immigration law. • Police directed to enter into a 287(g) agreement with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security • County staff directed to determine legal grounds for restricting illegal immigrants from receiving County-provided public benefits and services
October 16, 2007	**Board of County Supervisors Unanimously Passes Resolution 07-894:** • Authorized the creation of a Criminal Alien Unit within the police department • Staff directed to engage in a public outreach to educate the public, particularly minority and/or immigrant communities on the resolution and its implementation • Directed staff to enter into a partnership with an independent, non-partisan consulting group to evaluate the new police department policy • Directs staff to implement policies consistent with state and county law to prevent business licenses from being issued to persons who cannot demonstrate legal status • Directs staff to develop policies for restricting persons who cannot demonstrate legal status from receiving certain county services
February, 2008	**Police department signs 287(g) MOA with ICE, giving six detectives (Criminal Alien Unit) federal immigration authority**
February 19, 2008	**Board of County Supervisors Unanimously Passes Resolution 08-157:** • Places the FY2008 start-up costs of the program at $1,118,425 with a shortfall of $793,425 in funding. • Transfers $793,425 from the contingency or "rainy day" fund to support the police department's implementation of the immigration enforcement policy.
February 26, 2008	**Board Receives FY2009 Budget Recommendations for the Immigration Enforcement Policy:** • $6.4 million to enforce the policy in the first year, $3.1 of which would go to installing cameras and monitoring footage in the county's 250 police cars to defend the department against allegations of racial profiling • $26 million cost over a five-year period
March 3, 2008	**Police implement immigration enforcement policy (passed July 2007)**
April 29, 2008	**Board of County Supervisors Unanimously Passes Resolution 08-500:** Modifies the original directive to the police department in Resolution 07-609 by: • Directing police to check immigration status of all persons after they are arrested for violation of a state or county law • No longer mandates police to inquire into immigration status before a person is arrested Also makes clear that police still have ability to seek identifying or other information about persons under the scope set out by the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and that police can require pre-arrest investigation of previously deported immigrants suspected of a new crime under Virginia Code.
July 1, 2008	**Police implement revised immigration enforcement policy (passed April 29)**

HSM, who had put Supervisor Stirrup in touch with the Immigration Reform Law Institute (IRLI), a non-profit law firm dedicated to controlling illegal immigration and reducing legal immigration. IRLI provided "boilerplate" language for the initial legislation.

After the legislation was introduced, BOCS members received mass emails and phone calls in support—though it was later alleged that many came from outside the county. Little opposition emerged. Unlike localities with long-standing immigrant communities, Prince William County did not have a professional nonprofit infrastructure advocating on the behalf of immigrants. The resolution took the county's more informal network of immigrant advocates by surprise, leaving them with little time to organize a public response. The BOCS members seemed swayed by the grassroots campaign, the likes of which they had never seen, organized by HSM. Coincidently, seven of the eight members of BOCS were up for re-election in November 2007, and HSM members (approaching 2,000 by election time) made clear their intention to use immigration as a litmus test. The Board chair, Corey Stewart, ran his re-election campaign based solely on an anti-illegal-immigration platform. Although the stated purpose of the policy was to deter illegal immigration and its effects, fear spread among the broader immigrant and minority communities about the implications of the legislation.[36]

On July 10, 2007, the BOCS voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 07-609, a somewhat softened version of the measure introduced the previous month. It directed police to ascertain a person's legal status only when they had probable cause to believe the person was illegally present (rather than inquire of everyone they encountered). It also ordered a report by county staff in 90 days on the legal grounds for restricting unauthorized immigrants from receiving benefits. It ordered the police department to enter into a 287(g) agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The ICE 287(g) program allows state and local law enforcement entities to enter into partnership with the agency in order to enforce immigration law. Finally, it stated that the BOCS would send letters to President Bush, the Virginia congressional delegation, and Governor Tim Kaine, clarifying their position and asking for help in addressing the problem of illegal immigration.

By the time the resolution passed, however, some people began to raise concerns about its implications. Most notable were the remarks made on July 10th by Prince William's well-respected police chief, on the force since its founding in 1970 and chief since 1988.[37] The chief argued that the proposed legislation would have "significant unintended consequences," including the under-reporting of crime by minority populations as well as perceptions of the county "as a racist community intent on driving out a single population." The chief also worried that the resolution would result in a polarized population with "residents in solid pro and con camps" and would require higher taxes to pay increased operating costs for police and detention facilities.

A small group of local activists also came together following the July 10 vote to express their opposition. In September 2007, a resident erected a 12-by-40 foot sign in the city of Manassas that demanded, "Prince William County stop your racism to Hispanics." The sign's site became a gathering place for demonstrations against the resolution, as well as a flashpoint for debate. It was defaced multiple times before being firebombed. Activists replaced the ruined sign with another that more severely criticized the resolution and the County Board that adopted it.[38]

Residents, both for and against the original July resolution, set their sights on October 16—the date when the BOCS was to respond to staff and police proposals for implementing the resolution. Board members received mass emails, phone calls, and faxes urging them to continue to back the resolution. The leader of HSM acknowledged that national organizations, such as NumbersUSA, were helping inundate board members. In addition, the chairman of the BOCS—who was criticized for electioneering from the dais—used $30,000 of his discretionary budget to send a postcard to all county residents urging them to appear at the October 16 meeting to lend their support to the policy.[39]

On October 16, 2007, the BOCS held a 15-hour meeting that included spirited public comment both for and against the resolution. Following the debate Resolution 07-894 passed unanimously, restricting unauthorized immigrants from receiving business licenses and participating in eight social service programs.[40] In addition, the October 16 version of the resolution reflected recommendations made earlier by the police chief: it created a new criminal alien unit within the police department, directed police to engage in outreach on the new police policy, and directed the county to hire an independent consulting firm to evaluate it. The board also voted to install video cameras in the county's 250 police cars to record traffic stops and defend the department against accusations of racial profiling.

Election Day, November 6, came just two weeks later. BOCS Chairman Corey Stewart, who campaigned almost exclusively on his anti-illegal immigration stand, was reelected with 55 percent of the vote against his Democratic rival, who campaigned on a broader range of issues. In his acceptance speech, Stewart asserted that his re-election was evidence of widespread support for the county's new immigration policies.[41]

After the election, the BOCS turned its attention to implementing the immigration resolution—and paying for it. The estimated cost was $6.4 million, with half slated for the purchase of police car video cameras. In a tight budget year with dropping home values, supervisors balked at raising property taxes, particularly as the discord over the resolution and its price tag continued. Nonetheless, the BOCS did not want to leave police officers without the protection of video cameras. On April 29, 2008, the board modified the resolution so that the legal status of all persons arrested would be checked after arrest, eliminating the "probable cause" standard and the risk of racial profiling accusations and, thus, omitting the budget for police car video cameras.

E. In addition to swift demographic change, several other factors contributed to Prince William County's role at the forefront of a movement toward restrictionist policymaking on immigration.

While we have stressed the centrality of demographic change in creating Prince William County's immigration policy activism, a number of additional factors multiplied the impacts of demographic change and further explain how the county rose to the forefront of local immigration enforcement.

First, the emergence of local immigration policy activism was spurred on by Congress' failure to pass comprehensive immigration reform. When Congress failed to act in 2006 and 2007, leaders in many areas with fast-growing immigrant populations sought to address the issue at a local level, and a number of ordinances were passed in localities around the country that captured media and public attention. Much of the resolution's appeal, especially for local lawmakers, was that it placed the blame for Prince William County's problems squarely on the federal government's inability to keep unauthorized immigrants out of the United States.

Second, the sharpness of the national and local public debates was driven by talk radio, new forms of media such as blogs and web videos, television personalities such as Lou Dobbs, a new county television channel that aired BOCS meetings, and public forums, both governmental and nongovernmental alike. This discourse covered various dimensions of the immigration debate, but focused most prominently on the unauthorized population living in the United States. Newer forms of media, in particular, gave restrictionist groups an amplified voice.

Third, immigration control, traditionally under the authority of the federal government, has only recently become an issue that local areas have sought to control. Prince William County, along with other local governments searching for solutions, pursued the most forceful options available. Prince William's BOCS looked to other jurisdictions that had taken on immigration control, consulted with legal advocates, and aimed to improve on existing policies.

Fourth, the electoral calendar amplified the issue's importance. Seven of the eight county supervisors were up for reelection in the fall of 2007, and Chairman Stewart pushed to have the immigration resolution implemented before Election Day. The chairman was also accused of seeking media attention to gain national recognition in order to bolster his future political career beyond the county's borders.[42]

Fifth, Prince William County lacked a mature immigrant service and advocacy infrastructure. In areas with a more established immigrant population, well-developed networks of community- and faith-based organizations often serve as an intermediary between immigrant communities and government by providing information and advice about local laws and ordinances, referring immigrant residents to services, and providing outreach to immigrants who speak languages other than English. In some areas, local governments themselves reach out to immigrants, often with staff members serving a liaison role with immigrant constituents.[43] However, the county's immigrant population emerged quickly without time for these kinds of organizations and services to develop.

These issues—the federal-local debates, an unprepared local government, imported policy ideas, and the heightened pressures due to media attention and local political races—combined with rapid population change to create the confluence of factors that led to the much-publicized local crackdown.

Discussion

These factors remain, and there is continued disagreement in Prince William County about whether the costs—direct and indirect—have been worth the outcomes—intended and unintended. Some residents are angry that the legislation was rushed through without formal public input or staff research into the contention that unauthorized immigrants were causing "economic hardship and lawlessness" in the county.[44] Some are angry at the influence, real and perceived, outside interest groups had over county policy. Some are angry that the issue of immigration policy became a "wedge" election issue. And they are angry that the county's reputation was sullied, to some extent by sensationalized media reports.

Indeed, mainstream media has tended to focus on the opposing extremes of the debate, but most residents feel caught somewhere in the middle, overwhelmed by the growth and change happening around them and conflicted about how to respond to the challenges they present.

Some residents are pleased with the improvements they believe resulted from the immigration policy: reduced neighborhood blight, fewer ESOL students, and shorter lines at emergency rooms.[45] Above all, proponents of the legislation are pleased that a clear message was sent: Illegal immigration will not be tolerated in Prince William County.

While not enough time has passed to assess the long-term effects, there is some evidence demonstrating the more immediate civic costs of the policy. Immigrants, particularly Latin American immigrants, feel that they have become targets regardless of their legal status. An annual survey of Prince William County residents in 2008 revealed that for the first time in 15 years, Hispanic residents rated the "quality of life" in the county as significantly lower than other residents. Perhaps more importantly, survey results showed a plunge in satisfaction with the performance and attitudes of the police department among Hispanic residents, but not among other residents. While difficult to document, anecdotal evidence and school enrollment figures also suggest that many Latinos have left the county.[46]

Furthermore, the mandate for local police to identify and remove unauthorized immigrants has had mixed results. Prince William County's policy bears an estimated five-year cost of $11.3 million. Yet evidence suggests a limited impact. Of the 636 suspected unauthorized immigrants questioned in the first six months of the program, 45 percent were released with no charges or with summonses, while fifty-four percent were arrested. Ten individuals were determined to be legally present. Overall, fewer than 2 percent of all persons charged with crimes in the county were unauthorized immigrants.[47] In addition, it is unclear whether the new policy has had an impact on overall crime in the county; crime rates declined consistently from 2003 to 2007 and, at the time of this writing, comparable data for 2008 data are not yet available.[48]

In light of these consequences and emerging fiscal realities, Prince William County's leaders should revisit their actions. The county has been hit hard by the economic downturn. It has the largest number of foreclosed homes of any county in the region, approximately one in every 103 housing units.[49] With home values sinking and unemployment on the rise, the county's tax revenues are sure to decline significantly. Other municipalities, faced with high legal costs and implementation expenses, have scaled back the enforcement of planned immigration policies.[50]

Without federal action on immigration reform, municipalities face tough choices about how to manage changes underway in their communities. We offer several observations applicable to all municipalities undergoing rapid demographic change through immigration.

First, facts are important for effective policymaking. It is often difficult to stay current on the scale, scope, and composition of population change when it is occurring rapidly. Inaccuracies, rumors, and negative stereotypes about immigrants can grow quickly in this environment. It is imperative for those in leadership positions, both elected officials and others, to rely on official and valid information. Elected officials should draw on the grounded knowledge of school administrators, nonprofit leaders, service providers, and experts to accurately describe and quantify local conditions.

Second, local officials should communicate new policy decisions clearly. One item of concern to residents in Prince William County was the way the BOCS handled the passage of the resolution, which was without an official public hearing. Instead, an ad hoc public hearing—replete with high emotions—happened months after the resolution had already passed. When the resolution was first proposed, it took many residents by surprise, and may have seemed to some that county officials were more

interested in passing the resolution before an election than getting a policy that fit well with varying points of view. Building in processes to manage public awareness and input is critical. The Prince William County BOCS did add a public outreach component to its immigration policies, including forums in both English and Spanish. This helped to allay some fears within the Spanish-speaking community of the impact of the new policies. But the tone promoted by some members of the BOCS and, in turn, the media's reporting of events, served to undermine the forums' impact and sowed fear and uncertainty within the immigrant community.

Third, local problems are best served by policies appropriate to local areas. While the federal government has the exclusive responsibility for controlling the nation's borders, under most conditions of entry it has no authority over where immigrants live within the U.S. Nor can municipalities control who moves into or who is born into their jurisdictions.

While there is not yet a consensus or an established set of practices for managing immigration locally, there is a continuum of policies which states and localities have been testing more in recent years. These policy options include those that aim to control and ultimately reduce the public costs of providing services for unauthorized immigrants and their families, perhaps encouraging them to move elsewhere. They include law enforcement agreements with federal immigration authorities; restricting social services by legal status; restricting business licenses by legal status; explicitly prohibiting the hiring of unauthorized immigrants; prohibiting renting to unauthorized immigrants; and declaring English as the official language.

There are also non-punitive policy options that reach out to immigrants. These options include promoting English proficiency and breaking down language barriers; assisting in naturalization; acknowledging and supporting the economic contributions of immigrants; and working to build trust between law enforcement and immigrant communities. Local governments can also support organizations that work to civically, socially, and economically integrate immigrant newcomers and their families.

Finally, elected officials set the tone for how a locality thinks about its changing population. The words of local officials carry weight and residents look to their leaders for information and guidance. When legal status becomes the defining feature of an entire ethnic group in the public's eye, fear and civic isolation grow. While the lack of legal status of some immigrants is often used to make the case for strict policies, many of the problems in areas with swift growth in the immigrant population are intertwined with more generic growth issues and can more effectively be addressed as such.

Facing tough local issues such as immigration without easy answers and without a sensible framework of policies to draw upon can certainly heighten tensions between local governments and residents and between neighbors. Without a sense of unity, Prince William County may see further signs of isolation and segregation among immigrants. This segregation is not strictly one of residential separation, although if the county stays the current course that too may become a larger problem. However, the sense of civic segregation is potentially a far more harmful condition, leading to a divided county marked by low levels of interaction and trust.

The economic success of the county in drawing new businesses and new home construction in particular, brought many newcomers, both U.S.- and foreign-born to work, shop, and live during the past decade. The growth of the foreign-born population in Prince William County caught many off guard, including the county government. With the overall rapidity of population growth, neighborhood changes—including signs of overcrowding and stress—may have appeared at first to be temporary in nature. However, as growth continued, the county was ill-prepared to undertake modest policy practices to reduce friction until the problems seemed out of control and the need for strong action necessary.

Changes typical to fast-growing communities, such as the demands placed on schools, highways, and public services, were complicated by the visibility of a growing immigrant community, in particular a Spanish-speaking one. It took some time, but the county was able to address some of these complications on a case-by-case basis, in part through its Neighborhood Services Division. As Prince William County continues to grapple with demographic and economic changes, the Board of County Supervisors needs to take responsive actions that address, head-on, local complaints. Promoting policies that address the outward appearance of properties, for example, goes a long way toward good relationships between neighbors.

How well Prince William County weathers the economic downturn depends on its ability to attract and retain businesses, entice new homeowners, and retain existing residents.[51] Once a beacon for new

home owners in search of livable communities, Prince William County now has an opportunity, perhaps the necessity, to rebuild its reputation. A logical start would be to bring the public together on the immigration issue in ways that curb conflict rather than inflame it, and seek effective policies that successfully address long-term demographic change and challenges.

Endnotes

1. Migration Policy Institute and New York University School of Law. *State responses to immigration: A database of all state legislation.* 2007. Available online: www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/statelaws.cfm (accessed February 7, 2009).

2. See Marie Price and Audrey Singer. "Edge Gateways: Immigrants, Suburbs, and the Politics of Reception in Metropolitan Washington." In *Twenty-First Century Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburban America,* eds. Audrey Singer, Susan W. Hardwick, and Caroline B. Brettell, 137-170. (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008).

3. Anita Kumar. "Illegal immigration issues attract little interest outside Northern Virginia." *The Washington Post,* March 15, B1, 2008.

4. We use the terms "Washington region," "Washington metro," and "Washington area" interchangeably to refer to the federal government's 2007 definition of the Washington metropolitan area. For analytical purposes, we aggregate the 22 jurisdictions into five areas: the District of Columbia, the inner core, the inner suburbs, the outer suburbs, and the far suburbs (see Map 1). Although the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park are geographically surrounded by Prince William County, our analysis treats them separately from the county since they are independent municipalities. Prince William County became part of the Washington metropolitan area in 1971; prior to that, it was defined as non-metropolitan.

5. HMDA data was provided by DataPlace, available at www.dataplace.org

6. The following jurisdictions make up the Washington metropolitan area: Washington, D.C.; the Maryland counties of Montgomery, Prince George's, Calvert, Charles, and Frederick; the Virginia jurisdictions of Alexandria, Arlington, Falls Church, Fairfax (county and city), Loudoun, Prince William, Stafford, Clarke, Warren, Fauquier, and Spotsylvania; and the West Virginia county of Jefferson.

7. Manassas and Manassas Park became independent cities in 1975.

8. Census surveys attempt to count all residents and do not inquire about legal status, but people residing in the U.S. illegally may be less likely fill out a Census questionnaire.

9. Black Velvet Bruce Li (www.bvbl.net) and, starting in February, 2008, Anti-BVBL (www.anti-bvbl.net), were the two main blog sources.

10. Eric Byler and Annabel Park. 2007–2008. *9500Liberty.* Clips available at http://www.youtube.com/9500Liberty. Feature length film in production for 2009.

11. Job ranking from Bureau of Economic Analysis 2005 Wage and Salary Employment. Population ranking from Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, "Table 5. Estimates of Population Change for Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Rankings: July 1, 2005 to July 1, 2006" available at www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metro_general/2006 /CBSA-EST2006-05.xls (Accessed October 29, 2007).

12. For comparisons among metropolitan areas, see Audrey Singer, "Twenty-First Century Gateways: An Introduction," in Audrey Singer, Susan W. Hardwick, and Caroline B. Brettell, *Twenty-First Century Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburban America,* eds. (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008).

13. The cities of Fairfax and Falls Church are geographically contained within Fairfax County, but data for these jurisdictions are not included in this paragraph's analysis because 2006 data are not available for them. Tables 2 and 3 contain data for these cities from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 censuses.

14. We define the outer suburbs as Charles, Calvert, and Frederick counties in Maryland, and Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford counties in Virginia, in addition to the independent cities of Manassas and Manassas Park, Virginia, which are geographically contained within Prince William County. The analysis in this paragraph, however, does not include the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park because 2006 data are not available for them. Tables 2 and 3 contain data for these cities from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 censuses.

15. Annual population increase calculations based on Population Estimates data from Census Bureau. Available at factfinder.census.gov.

16. Data from 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses and the 2006 American Community Survey.

17. Although immigrants from Europe and Asia made up a smaller proportion of total immigrants, their population nevertheless grew between 1990 and 2006. Europeans increased from 2,600 to 3,600, while Asians increased from 5,400 to 24,200.

18. D'Vera Cohn, "ESL Enrollment Slows in Inner Suburbs." *Washington Post,* December 20, 2004; Lyndsey Layton and Dan Keating, "Area Immigrants Top 1 Million." *Washington Post,* August 16 2006.

19. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is defined (for the population age 5 and over) as speaking English less than "very well." Thus, those who indicate that they speak English "well," "not well," or "not at all" are included in this definition.

20. Karina Fortuny, Randy Capps, and Jeffrey S. Passel, "The Characteristics of Unauthorized Immigrants in California, Los Angeles County, and the United States."(Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2007).

21. For a national comparative analysis of exurban areas, see Alan Berube, Audrey Singer, Jill H. Wilson, and William H. Frey, "Finding Exurbia: America's Fast-Growing Communities at the Metropolitan Fringe,"(Washington: Brookings Institution, 2006).

22. Data on home prices come from Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc. (MRIS). We borrow Turner et al's (2007) thresholds for affordability.

23. Margery Austin Turner, G. Thomas Kingsley, Kathryn L.S. Petit, Mary Kopczynski Winkler, Barika X. Williams. *Housing in the Nation's Capital,* 2007. (Washington DC: The Urban Institute, 2007).

24. We use the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), a Bureau of Labor Statistics survey, to review total employment from 1990 to 2006 and super-sector employment among private establishments in 2006.

25. Audrey Singer, "Latin American Immigrants in the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area." Paper prepared for "Latin American Immigrants: Civic and Political Participation in the Washington, D.C. Metro Area, (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2007).

26. Based on our analysis of HMDA data by race and income for Census tracts (provided by Dataplace).

27. We use the terms "up-county" and "down-county" as shorthand to refer to the neighborhoods along the I-66 corridor in the north and the I-95 corridor in the south, respectively.

28. Spatial analysis of 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census data show that census tracts in these up-county neighborhoods were majority-white and native-born during those years. The most-affected down-county tracts had a longer history of minority (black and Hispanic) settlement, as well as military personnel, and were less vocal on these issues.

29. Based on interviews, blogs, BOCS meeting testimonies, and media coverage.

30. The county's zoning ordinance does not distinguish by level of family relationship, so multiple nuclear families related to each another are permitted to live together with up to two unrelated boarders. Some long-term residents were shocked when they discovered the permissiveness of the ordinance. See discussion in the introduction of Manassas City's move to more narrowly define family relationships for zoning purposes.

31. Data in this paragraph refer to fiscal years (October through September) and were provided by the Department of Neighborhood Services.

32. Specifically, the staff produced a list of the services already being denied to illegal immigrants, services that may not legally be denied, and services that have no regulation governing their provision to illegal immigrants.

33. January 19, 2007 memo from Prince William County Executive to BOCS, available at http://www.pwcgov.org/docLibrary/PDF/008284.pdf.

34. Price and Singer, 2008.

35. http://www.helpsavemanassas.org/index.php/about

36. In September of 2007, the Ku Klux Klan distributed an anti-immigrant appeal to "white, Christian Americans" to some households in Manassas. Klan officials claimed that local residents called and asked for the literature to be distributed, but officials and activists on both sides of the issue condemned the leafleting. See, Pamela Constable 2007, "Klan Leaflets Denounced in Manassas," *The Washington Post,* September 6.

37. Police chief's remarks available here: http://www.pwcgov.org/docLibrary/PDF/006635.pdf

38. Amid growing pressure from the City's zoning enforcement division, the sign was removed by the owner on September 9, 2008.

39. The postcard announced the BOCS vote on "implementing its policy to crackdown on illegal immigration and cut off taxpayer-funded services to illegal aliens." It urged residents to attend the meeting or contact their district supervisor to have their voice heard.

40. In January, 2008, staff reported back with the recommendation to remove two of the programs from the list of restricted services. The revised resolution came into effect on July 1, 2008.

41. The chairman received 30,334 votes, which represented 16 percent of the registered voters in the county at the time of the election.

42. In February, 2008, he announced his intention to run for lieutenant governor of Virginia in 2009. The following month, when the incumbent decided that he would not run for governor but seek reelection for lieutenant governor, the BOCS Chairman put his plans on hold.

43. For more on proactive integration policies see Pablo A. Mitnik, Jessica Halpern-Finnerty and Matt Vidal, "Cities and Immigration: Local Policies for Immigrant-Friendly Cities," (Madison: Center on Wisconsin Strategy, 2008); and Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, "Investing in Our Communities: Strategies for Immigrant Integration, A Toolkit for Grantmakers, (Sebastopol, CA: Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees, 2006)

44. Quote from resolution passed July 10, 2007 by BOCS, available at http://www.pwcgov.org/documents/bocs/briefs/2007/0710/res07-609.pdf.

45. Recent reports from the County show some data to support these perceptions, though more time is needed to determine a trend. September 9 report to BOCS from County Executive's office available at http://www.pwcgov.org/documents/bocs/agendas/2008/0909/6-C.pdf and September 16 report to BOCS from Neighborhood Services available at http://www.pwcgov.org/documents/bocs/agendas/2008/0916/9-A.pdf.

46. Ian Shapira, "ESOL Enrollment is Higher than Projected." *Washington Post,* October 12, 2008. The news account indicates that though ESOL enrollment in Prince William declined, it did not decline to the extent of school district projections.

47. Based on data from police chief's report to BOCS on September 9, 2008, available here: http://www.pwcgov.org/docLibrary/PDF/008898.pdf. The original policy was implemented by police on March 3, 2008. BOCS revised it on April 29, after which police suspended enforcement for two months until the new version could be implemented on July 1, 2008. Thus, these data represent results of three different policies.

48. Prince William County Police Department, 2007 Crime Statistics report, available at http://www.pwcgov.org/docLibrary/PDF/007665.pdf

49. According to RealtyTrac.com's July, 2008 data.

50. Cristina Rodriguez, "The Significance of the Local in Immigration Regulation," 106 *Michigan Law Review* 567, 2008.

51. In a Washington Post article, prospective buyers on a recent "foreclosure bus tour" of northern Virginia cited the extra commute, school quality and political tensions over the county's policies toward illegal immigration as barriers to buying in Prince William County, despite lower home prices relative to other jurisdictions. See Nick Miroff, "Real Estate Road Trips Scout Troubled Market; Foreclosure Tours Show Vacant Properties and Provide Advice," (*The Washington Post,* March 31, 2008).

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express gratitude to the public and private individuals who were consulted during the course of this project. We appreciate their frankness and their desire to have Prince William's story told. Our thanks also go to Roberto Suro, Cristina Rodriguez, Marie Price, Caroline Brettell, Monica Varsanyi, Martha Ross, Alan Berube, Amy Liu, and David Jackson, who reviewed earlier drafts and offered sound advice.

The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program would like to thank the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, the Heinz Endowments, and the Rockefeller Foundation for their general support of the program, and the Eugene and Agnes Meyer Foundation, and the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation for their support of the program's work in the Greater Washington area.

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