Co-opting Frames or: How to Stop a Housing Development
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Abstract
Liberal municipalities are more likely to limit housing supply elasticity by facilitating the expansion of neighborhood-level conflicts to citywide debates through a co-optation of liberal ideological frames.

Theory
Liberal city
Conservative city

Neighborhood-level opposition to new development

Liberal city
Ideological infrastructure
• Social justice
• Environmental protection
• Community self-preservation

Expansion of scope of conflict to city-level debates

Recruit new allies from city-level conflicts

Outcomes
• Defeat/rescaling of specific development
• Future proposals viewed as citywide debates

Conservative city
Ideological infrastructure
• Protection of property rights
• Deregulation

Conflict remains at neighborhood-level

No new neighborhood allies to recruit

Outcomes
• Development proceeds
• Future proposals viewed as neighborhood quality of life issues

Motivation
• Since 1970, the dispersion of housing prices in the US has increased, disproportionately at the top end.
• Rent inflation not only burdens citizens but hinders the socio-economic mobility of those priced-out.
• Divergence stems from the elasticity of housing supply, with regulations controlling the density of new development.

Analytical Strategy
• Longitudinal analysis of ideology v. elasticity markers
• Public opinion survey of ideology and development attitudes
• Real-time survey of public opinion during development conflicts

Relationship
• OV: Survey of regulatory environment (Gyourko et al. 2008)
• IV: MRP estimates of municipal ideology (Warshaw and Tausanovitch 2014)
• Controls: median income, city pop., % Black, median housing value, MSA fixed effects
• Results: One sd increase in conservative ideology is correlated with a 0.2 sd decrease in regulation.

Seeking Feedback
• Causal identification (e.g. city-county forced consolidation)
• Alternative strategies of analysis
• Data sources (municipal-level data)