

The Consequences of Specialized Governance on Spending and Expansion of Public Transit*

Christopher B. Goodman[†] *University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Suzanne M. Leland *University of North Carolina at Charlotte*

Olga Smirnova *East Carolina University*

Special purpose governments are commonly characterized as hidden governments with less taxpayer accountability and more debt than general purpose governments (Foster 1997; Greer 2016). However, little research has been conducted to see if operating and capital expenses are driven by the public's perception of need or are a policy consequence of functional specialization. The following study tests how problem salience and form of government interact to impact local governments' expenditures. We use National Transit Data (2013-2014) to test these moderating relationships. Our findings indicate that at least in the context of public transit, the problem salience is important for operating expenditures, but does not seem to have the same effect on the capital spending for expansion. This suggests that service area characteristics play a larger role in the spending and expansion than form of government. This also indicates that the moderating effect of salience and governance (Mullin 2008) does not appear to be significant for public transit policy.

Keywords: public transit, special districts

Introduction

Special purpose governments (special districts, authorities and government corporations) have rapidly spread in popularity as an alternative service delivery mechanism at the local level (Miller 2002; Macedo 2005; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Martell 2007; Heikkila and Isett 2007). While they typically have narrow missions and serve limited areas, they still generally possess the power to tax and issue debt authorized provided by state law although they may have limited tax bases and thus less diversified economic bases (Greer 2016). According to the US Census bureau definition, they have sufficient administrative and fiscal autonomy to qualify as separate governments (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). Special purpose governments are political subdivisions and have legal rights and duties. Sometimes referred to as public corporations, they provide services such as fire protection, water, public transit, library districts and conservation.

This study compares special purpose governments' operating and capital expenditures for expansion when compared to general purpose governments (cities and counties) while controlling for need for a couple reasons. First, special purpose governments are the fastest growing form of US local government and are increasingly used for expensive capital projects in which they accumulate debt (Foster 1997; Martell 2007; Greer 2016). In fact, special purpose government

*Preliminary Draft, Please do not cite or circulate without author's permission.

[†]November 21, 2018

growth is viewed as the key driver of local government debt and because these governments have limited economic bases, they also bring about different types of risks in borrowing (Greer 2016).

Second, their governance structures are often criticized by the literature as less accountable and less transparent than general purpose governments (Heikkila and Isett 2007). Studies indicate that when compared to cities and counties, citizens are less aware of the debt they issue when it comes to special purpose governments (Martell 2007). They are viewed as more “hidden” from the public because most have very low visibility and no regular election of offices (Foster 1997). This lack of public participation in special purpose governments makes them more vulnerable to special interests, in particular private interests who invest in influencing their public officials through lobbying (Burns 1994).

However, there is little empirical evidence that supports that these assumptions are uniform across policy issues and different demand for services by the public. Only one empirical study on water rate structures ties issue salience to differences in forms of government and suggests the conditions of special purpose governments may vary (Mullin 2008). For these reasons our study looks at the specific conditions in which special purpose governments operate and when they may be most vulnerable to narrower interests than cities or counties because of their lack of public participation. Building upon Mullin’s study and the notion that the visibility of special purpose and general purpose governments may vary to the public based on issue salience, this paper looks at how form of government and measures of issue salience interact to produce different levels of expenditures and expansion.

Public transportation provides an ideal test for understanding the differences between how special purpose governments and general purpose governments (cities and counties) respond to problem severity because transit services are provided by different types of governments, and the two largest forms are represented by general purpose (49% of the total) and special purpose governments (30%). The National Transit Database (NTD) also provides detailed performance and financial data about 98 percent of all passenger trips occurring in the United States (APTA 2015); these services are provided by urban public bus providers that report their data annually since the early 1980s. The NTD includes information on the funds directly generated by transit agencies, various sources of federal funds, different taxes financing public transit among performance measures and service area characteristics (population and area size). To measure problem severity, we use congestion costs from the Urban Mobility Scorecard (2015) data published by Texas A&M Transportation Institute. This data allows us to test the interaction with form of government and problem severity and its impact on spending and expansion.

Governance Arrangements & Fragmentation

In general, special purpose governments increase local government fragmentation by providing a new service or extracting an existing municipal service from a city or county. Under inter-jurisdictional competition models, special purpose governments can provide the optimal scale for specific services because fragmentation creates choice and allocational efficiency (Tiebout 1956). Functional specialization can produce economies of scale (Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren 1961) and regional flexibility (Olberding 2002; Mullin 2008). Accountability can be improved because of the creation of multiple access points for the public to give input (Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren 1961) and because there is now a single group of officials who are responsible for one specific service.

Opponents of local government fragmentation often argue for regionalism because local government fragmentation creates duplication of services and creates additional transactions costs, and therefore reduces the overall efficiency of local government (Pierce, W., and Hall 1993; Downs 1994; Rusk 1993; Orfield 1997). More narrowly, the critics of special purpose governments contend that they are created not for the purpose of greater efficiency, but instead to circumvent debt limitations placed on local governments (Sbragia 1996). Also, special purpose governments face different legal requirements with regards to sources of revenue generation.

The literature is generally supportive of the assertion that special purpose governments will spend more than general purpose governments on a particular service; something Foster (1997) calls the upward spending bias. Under the public choice or intergovernmental competition perspective, this upward bias in spending is exactly the point, matching demands for spending with a form of government capable of meeting those demands. Under the regionalist or reform perspective, special purpose governments will spend more because they exploit their monopoly power over a particular service area. Absent the competition between services that exists in general purpose governments, special purpose governments may be less efficient in their service delivery and driving up costs (Goodman 2015). Regardless of perspective, the expectation is that special purpose governments will spend more on a particular service than a general purpose government.

Governance in Public Transit Policy

The search for the most appropriate form of government to deliver public services is a reoccurring topic of study in the public policy and public administration literatures (Burns 1994; Foster 1997; Clingermayer and Feiock 2001; Feiock and Kim 2001; Greer 2016). It has been studied to a certain extent in transportation policy because it is viewed as an important institutional arrangement that impacts efficiency and effectiveness (Perry and Babitsky 1986; Leland and Smirnova 2008; Zullo 2008) and federal aid (Smirnova, Leland, and Johnson 2008).

Both Perry and Babitsky (1986) and Leland and Smirnova (2008) look at how different governing arrangements such as special purpose governments and general purpose governments for bus service impact transit efficiency and effectiveness. Perry and Babitsky (1986) found no major differences between different forms of governments, except that privately operated agencies were more efficient. Twenty-five years later, Leland and Smirnova (2008) still do not find major differences between special and general purpose governments, and they also find privately operated agencies are no longer more efficient. Both special and general purpose governments that contract out have lower service efficiency. What if these differences exist only at certain levels of issue saliency?

These previous transit governance studies do not take into account the nature of the policy issue—is it something that a community is concerned about and is paying close attention to or is it an issue that largely goes unnoticed by the general public unless some sort of crisis occurs? And can scholars' measure issue saliency if we have measures of problem severity?

Saliency of Public Policy Issues

A highly salient issue is defined as one that affects the public in a significant way (Gormley 1986). It has long been viewed as a key element of democratic responsiveness. Citizens that care about a particular problem are more likely to take elected officials on actions on that issue day in account

when voting. This in turn leads elected officials to be particularly responsive to more salient issues (Price 1978; Burstein 2003; Wlezien, *Journal of Politics*). Saliency is typically low for public policy issues unless it impacts a large number of people to the point where the intensity of the conflict is high and the scope of the conflict is broad (Gormley 1986; Shattschneider 1960). Issue saliency can change if the underlying problem worsens or improves; demographic conditions change, or an issue is redefined by a policy entrepreneur (Gormley 1986).

We found only one study (Mullin 2008) that actually looks at the interaction of specialized governance and issue saliency. Mullin (2008) finds that governing structure matters depending upon the saliency of the problem in the area of water policy. She uses a Heckman probit model to determine the adoption of local progressive water rates by whether the governing body is elected (general purpose governments) or appointed (special districts). Our study builds upon her idea that the policy consequences of delegating policy problems to special purpose governments may be conditional on the severity of the problem and manifest themselves in different levels of operating expenses and probability of spending capital on expansions.

One proxy for issue saliency in local public transit provision is congestion. Congestion can become worse because of insufficient capacity due to demographic and geographic changes and/or ineffective management of capacity. Temporary issues such as work zones, bad weather and accidents also contribute to the daily problems. Public transit is seen as an important solution to congestion because it offers alternative modes of transportation other than the automobile and can transport more passengers at once. There are multiple ways congestion is measured. Higher average speeds of a service area may indicate less congested or suburban areas, while the slower average speed of a transit agency may pinpoint agencies located in congested areas or densely populated urban centers. The advantage of using average speeds is that it is a continuous variable. However, it may be impacted by the local speed limit. Texas A&M Transportation Institute publishes Annual Urban mobility (2015) scorecard which draws on the traffic speed data. At the same time, the congestion costs more directly measure the saliency of the issue. This measure translates the congestion issue into monetary value. The data indicates that the urban areas with the highest density usually have the highest congestion. Therefore, we use the measure of congestion costs as a proxy of issue saliency.

Data and measurements

We utilize the National Transit Database (NTD) for a two-year period, 2013-2014. The NTD contains information on agencies that provide services in urban areas mostly, and according to APTA (2015) approximately 98 percent of transit passenger trips in 2013 were carried out by urban transit agencies. There are 849 agencies that report their statistics during the study period. Small agencies receive system waivers if they operate less than 30 vehicles (about 291 agencies are small systems; once these systems are accounted for, the ratio of special purpose and general purpose governments is nearly equal). The recipients of the Urbanized Area Formula Program or the Rural Formula program are required by law to submit their data if they continue to operate any items purchased with federal funds. The other urban transit reporters are encouraged to volunteer their information to the database in the hope of securing future funding. About 12 percent of NTD reporters are volunteers, and 50 percent of these volunteers are small systems. The NTD creates a unique data source about transit systems nationally.

We have two measures of spending: total operating expenses for the agency and operating expenses for bus operations only. The total operating expenses may capture the administrative premium that special purpose governments may have to pay by focusing on just one service (transit in our case). At the same time, the special purpose governments may be less efficient through their specialized focus on one mission goal (e.g. bus service provision); hence we look at both total operating expenses and operating expenses for bus services. We focus on bus operations as the most widely used fixed guideway service in the US.

The other set of dependent variables deals with the capital spending on expanding operations. Again, special purpose governments may have easier time expanding their operations than general purpose governments where transit expansion may compete with other mission goals. We test both expansion of the system overall and bus services expansion. Even though, this measure focuses on the capital funds; we only have a dichotomous measure of whether an agency has been spending money on expansion in a given year, and not the total amount of spending.

The average operating expenses in 2013 were over \$48 million and over \$51 million in 2014. They range from zero to over \$8 billion with the standard deviation of over \$300 million. Table ?? contains the list of all variables with their definitions.

Table 1: Variables and measurements

Variable	Definition
<i>Dependent variables</i>	
Operating expenses (2014 format ¹)	Total operating expenses for bus operations, the expenses include PT funds reported separately
Operating expenses (bus only, 2014 format)	Total operating expenses for bus operations, the expenses exclude PT funds reported separately
Expand (dichotomous)	Expand equals 1 if an agency spends capital funds on the expansion of services
Expand bus operations (dichotomous)	Expand equals 1 if an agency spends capital funds on the expansion of bus services
<i>Explanatory variables</i>	
Form of government	Special governance (mainly represented by authorities) equals 1; city and county operated transit services (0)
Congestion (log)	Annual congestion cost
Interaction of congestion and form of government	The interaction of form of government and congestion cost (a continuous interaction terms which coefficient indicates the effect of congestion for special governance on DVs).
<i>Control variables</i>	
VOMS (size) (log)	log of vehicles operated in maximum service (VOMS)
Bus plus (dummy)	equals 1 for operating any other mode
Dedicated at source state and local (log)	log of dedicated at source
Expanded (dummy)	Equals 1 if an agency spends capital on expanding operations
Federal funds (log)	federal funds total
State funds and local funds (log)	State and local funds general revenue
Contract out bus (dummy)	Dummy
Year dummy (2014)	Equals 1 for 2014 records
Region US Census ²	US Bureau Census regions

We measure general purpose governments as all departments of municipal and county governments providing transit services. The special purpose governments are represented by authorities and special districts. Our form of government variable equals one for special purpose governance, and zero for general purpose governments. There are approximately 254 authorities or special districts reporting to the NTD and 419 general purpose governments.

We also use congestions costs as a measure representing the salience of the issue. An extension of Mullin (2008) moderation hypothesis implies that the effect of the governance is moderated or altered with the level of the congestion as a form of problem severity. Hence, we create an interaction term for the form of governance and congestion costs. Congestions costs as well as a number of control variables are also positively skewed; hence, we logged-transform them (Oliver and Norberg 2010).

We also include the following variables in our vector of controls: vehicles operated in maximum service (VOMS) approximate the fleet size, and are frequently used by the NTD to mark their relative size of a transit agency. Larger transit agencies may face different demands for both debt formation and revenue generation. We also control for whether a transit agency operates not only buses (the bus plus measure). Operating multiple modes of transportation may allow agencies to enjoy economies of scope (e.g. use the same maintenance facilities for different modes) or create a different level of complexity of operations (e.g. scheduling both light rail and buses to complement each other). Agencies operating rail modes, for example, usually have higher capital expenditures, and in some areas may have higher operating expenses. Some transit agencies may have certain funds dedicated at source from the state or local taxes. Such funds may provide additional fiscal stability, but for local governments, especially general purpose governments, such sources usually come through voting or direct involvement of electorate.

In the models with operating expenses, we control for whether agencies spent capital on expanding their existing operations (which may require additional spending) and the amount of federal, state, and local funds that an agency receives (which may finance additional spending). Finally, we control for whether an agency contracts out for some of the services since a previous study by Leland and Smirnova (2008) find this influences the level of efficiency. The descriptive statistics are located in table ??.

The agencies that operate additional modes of transportation and have larger fleets are also more likely to expand and have higher long-term debt than those who are smaller. This makes sense because agencies need to finance the expansion of the infrastructure, and larger agencies (measured by VOMS) may have easier time to find financing and/or may have a greater need for expansion.

Discussion of results

As table 3 indicates, all models are significant. The model with total operating expenses as dependent variable has an adjusted R^2 of higher magnitude than the model with operating expenses for

²In 2013, the operating expenses included purchased transportation funds reported separately, perhaps leading to the larger number of operating expenses for the agencies that contract out, and may be double-counted if both agencies report data. In 2014, the total operating expenses number reported included both amounts with and without operating expenses on contracts. This may lead to smaller amounts, but eliminated the problem of double-counting operating expenses. While we report 2014-definition for both years, we have also run models using 2013 definition, and since the correlation coefficients for these measures are 0.99, the models are nearly identical to the ones presented here.

²https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Operating expense	1650	49,955,423.17	323,965,667.47	0	8,371,038,633
Operating expenses (bus services only)	1298	29,764,399.09	130,258,395.78	0	2,612,634,472
Expanding any services	1352	0.16	0.37	0	1
Expanding bus services	1080	0.13	0.34	0	1
Special purpose governance	1371	0.37	0.48	0	1
Congestion costs	1678	1,965.78	3,839.61	3.34	14,712
Interaction term (special governance and congestion costs)	1350	524.85	1,821.81	0	14,712
Total VOMS	1323	138.42	526.97	0	10,805
Bus plus	1352	0.18	0.39	0	1
Total dedicated at source	1119	8,882,860.09	57,950,481.30	0	894,337,123
Contracting out any services	1352	0.33	0.47	0	1
Contracting out bus services only	1352	0.78	0.41	0	1
Year (2014)	1706	0.50	0.50	0	1.00
Region (South)	1706	0.34	0.47	0	1.00

bus services. The size of an agency is a significant factor in all models (measured by the vehicles operated in maximum service (VOMS)).

Since both continuous dependent and independent variables are logged-transformed, we can interpret the regression coefficients as percentages. The special governance variable is not significant in any of the models. The same applies to the interaction of governance and issue saliency, except for the overall operating expenses. The special purpose governments are spending additional 7 percent in the highly congested areas. The issue salience as measured by the congestions costs is significant for both overall and bus only operating expenses. For every increase in congestion costs, a transit agency may expect to spend 7 percent more on bus operations. The general purpose governments may expect to spend 8.7 percent on the overall operations, while special purpose governments may spend additional 7 percent (for the total effect of over 15 percent) with the increase in congestion costs. However, these results hold only in one model, and maybe measurement-dependent.

The figure ?? shows the predictive margins for the form of government variable with 95 percent confidence intervals. The differences in the slopes between the general purpose and special purpose governments signals the significant interaction term. This figure also helps to illustrate how the main effect of form of government is not significant at 0.05 level; there is a small cross over interaction, indicating that with the lower congestion costs special purpose governments maybe spending less than general purpose governments, but as congestion costs rise, their spending accelerates. For the contrast, figure ?? shows the predictive margins for the bus operating expenses only, where there is no interaction effect detected.

The only consistent predictor in our models is the size of the agencies (VOMS). Both dedicated funding and the bus plus variables are important but only for the overall operating expenses. Contracting out increases significantly the expenses of bus service and the likelihood that a transit agency spends capital funds on the expansion.

Table 3: Regression results

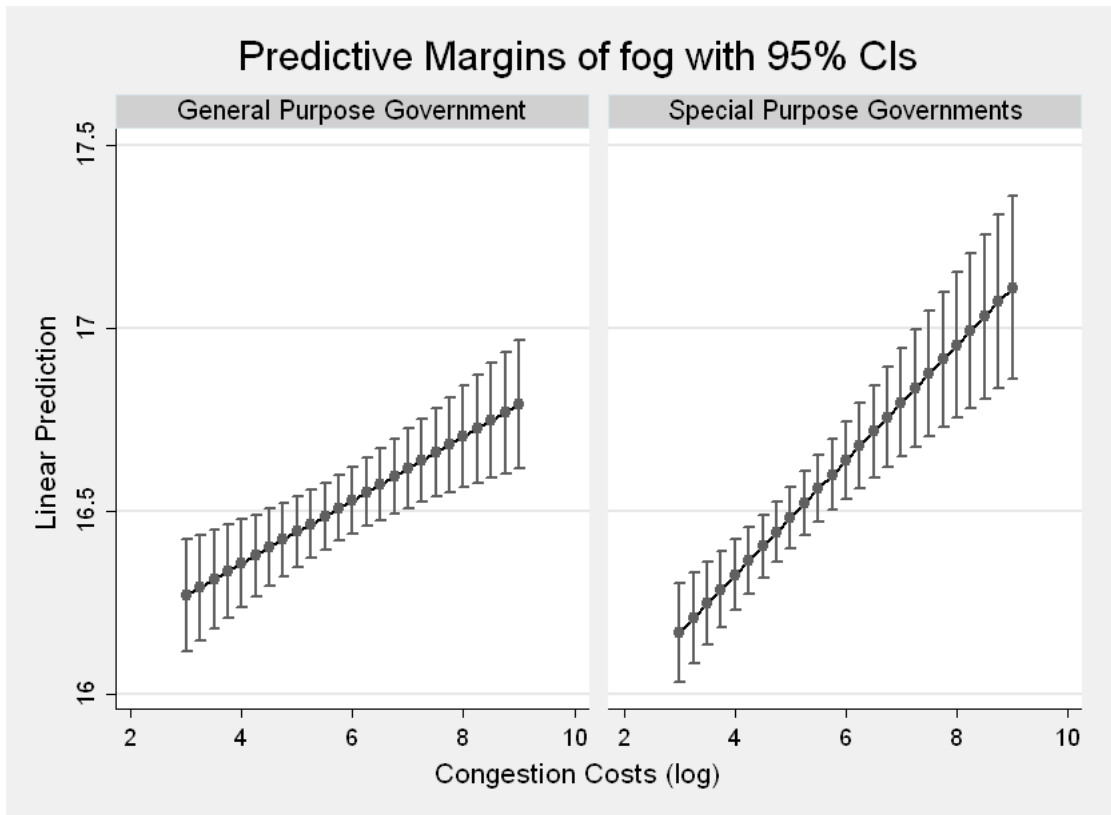
	Total operating expenses		Total operating expenses for bus services		Expanding operations		Expanding bus operations only	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Special governance (=1)	-0.312	0.171	-0.203	0.228	0.281	0.747	-0.562	0.905
Congestion costs, log	0.087**	0.023	0.074*	0.032	-0.092	0.103	-0.052	0.145
Interaction of special governance and congestion costs	0.070*	0.031	0.023	0.039	-0.034	0.114	0.050	0.141
Total VOMS, log	0.855**	0.041	0.982**	0.042	0.874**	0.143	0.706**	0.148
Bus plus	0.521**	0.090	-0.121	0.123	0.714*	0.230	0.229	0.319
Total dedicated at source, log	0.008*	0.004	0.009	0.007	0.059**	0.018	0.038	0.023
Expanding services	0.069	0.075	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Expanding bus services	n/a	n/a	—	—	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Contracting out services (=1)	-0.043	0.063	n/a	n/a	0.553*	0.249	n/a	n/a
Contracting out bus services (=1)	n/a	n/a	1.475**	0.255	n/a	n/a	—	—
South (=1)	-0.142*	0.062	-0.186*	0.080	0.337	0.307	0.580	0.343
2014 (=1)	0.037**	0.015	0.050*	0.020	-0.397*	0.141	-0.250	0.154
intercept	12.204**	0.158	10.127**	0.302	-6.094**	0.715	-4.743	0.775
N	797 (274 clusters)		721 (270 clusters)		797 (274 clusters)		691 (268 clusters)	
Adj. R ²	0.852***		0.762**		0.194**b		0.112**b	

Conclusions

This study compares special purpose governments' operating and capital expenses to those operated out of a city or county while controlling for issue salience. Special purpose governments are often characterized as less accountable and less transparent when compared to general purpose governments. But is this really a fair assessment? Are they really more likely to be captured by special interests and thus less responsive to the public's policy preferences because they are not typically government by elected bodies? Our models indicate that at in the context of public transit, the interaction of salience of the issue and governance arrangement does not seem to have the same effect on expansion and operating expenses. Only for overall expenses, we may talk about conditional responsiveness of local governments, and in our models it is special purpose governments that are more responsive to the level of salience to the policy problem, directly contradicting previous research (Mullin 2008). However, these results may help to explain the lack of differences between general purpose and special purpose governments, or why sometimes special purpose governments are less efficient than general purpose governments. The salience of an issue as measured by congestion costs increases the operating expenses, but does not affect whether an agency will be incurring capital spending on existing system expansion. Overall, a different set of factors may influence local government operating spending and capital expenditures on expansions.

Our results indicate that some of the organizational characteristics such as agency size and complexity of its operations have a more important impact on operating expenses and expansion of an existing system. However, there may be limitations translating these result to services other than transportation such as water which may account for the differences in the findings of Mullin (2008) study of water districts. After all, changing your water provider may be impossible because there is typically only a single provider for a resident. While changing your mode of transportation

Figure 1: Model 1 Predictive Margins

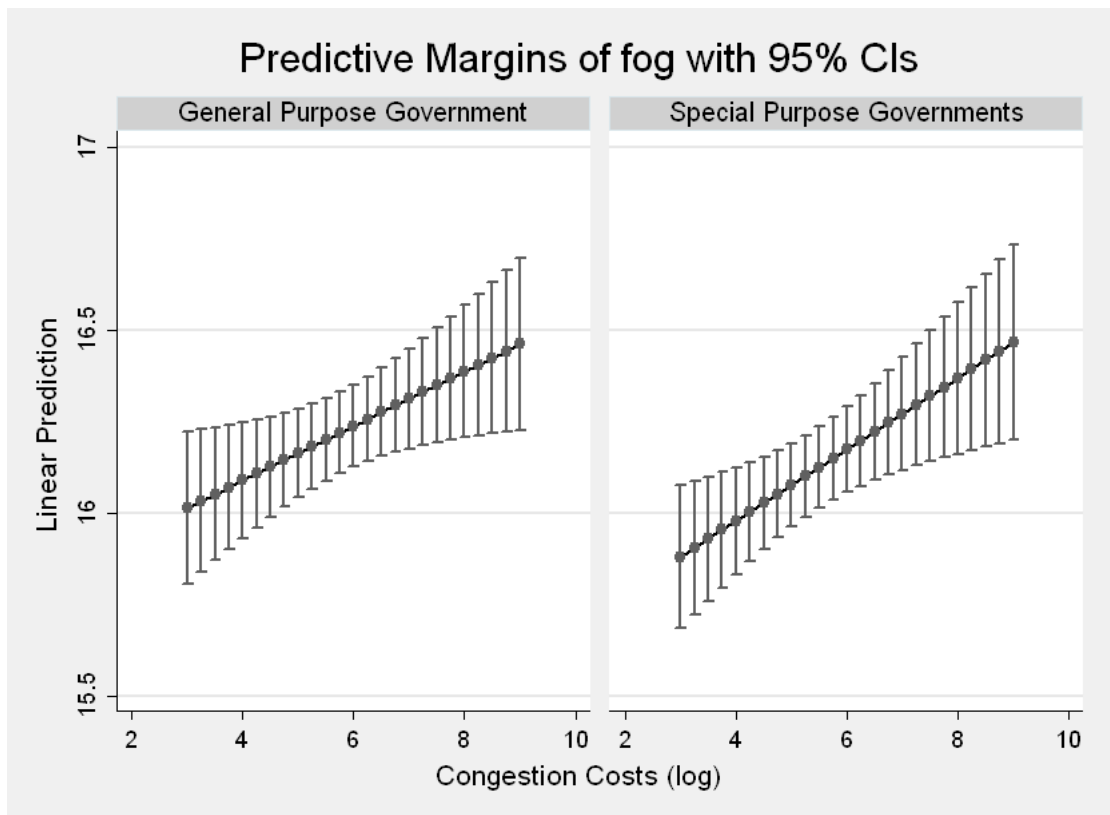


is still a viable option for some users. For example, their options may include walking, biking, driving, carpooling, and taking a taxi or an Uber as opposed to using the public transit system. Future research needs to be conducted in order to better understand a wider variety of policy areas.

References

- Burns, Nancy. 1994. *The Formation of American Local Governments: Private Values in Public Institutions*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Burstein, Paul. 2003. "The Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy: A Review and an Agenda." *Political Research Quarterly* 56 (1): 29–40.
- Clingermayer, James C., and Richard C. Feiock. 2001. *Institutional Constraints and Policy Choice: An Exploration of Local Governance*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Downs, Anthony. 1994. *New Visions for Metropolitan America*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Feiock, Richard C., and Jae-Hoon Kim. 2001. "Form of government, administrative organization, and local economic development policy." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 11 (1): 29–50.
- Foster, Kathryn A. 1997. *The Political Economy of Special-Purpose Government*. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Figure 2: Model 2 Predictive Margins



- Goodman, Christopher B. 2015. "Local Government Fragmentation and the Local Public Sector: A Panel Data Analysis." *Public Finance Review* 43 (1): 82–107.
- Gormley, William T., Jr. 1986. "Regulatory Issue Networks in a Federal System." *Polity* 18 (4): 595–620.
- Greer, Robert A. 2016. "Local Government Risk Assessment: The Effect of Government Type on Credit Rating Decisions in Texas." *Public Budgeting & Finance* 36 (2): 70–90.
- Heikkila, Tanya, and Kimberley R. Isett. 2007. "Citizen involvement and performance management in specialpurpose governments." *Public Administration Review* 67 (2): 238–248.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, and Gary Marks. 2009. "Does Efficiency Shape the Territorial Structure of Government?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (1): 225–241.
- Leland, Suzanne M., and Olga Smirnova. 2008. "Does government structure matter? A comparative analysis of urban bus transit efficiency." *Journal of Public Transportation* 11 (1): 4.
- Macedo, Stephen. 2005. *Democracy at Risk*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Martell, Christine R. 2007. "Debt burdens of overlapping jurisdictions." *Municipal Finance Journal* 28 (2): 1–23.
- Miller, David Y. 2002. *The Regional Governing of Metropolitan Areas*. Cambridge, MA: Westview.
- Mullin, Megan. 2008. "The Conditional Effect of Specialized Governance on Public Policy." *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (1): 125–141.

- Olberding, Julie C. 2002. "Does regionalism beget regionalism? The relationship between norms and regional partnerships for economic development." *Public Administration Review* 62 (4): 480–491.
- Oliver, Jake, and Melissa M. Norberg. 2010. "Positively Skewed Data: Revisiting the Box-Cox Power Transformation." *International Journal of Psychological Research* 3 (1): 68–75.
- Orfield, Myron. 1997. *Metropolitics: A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Ostrom, Vincent, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren. 1961. "The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry." *American Political Science Review* 55 (4): 831–842.
- Perry, James L., and Timlynn T. Babitsky. 1986. "Comparative Performance in Urban Bus Transit: Assessing Privatization Strategies." *Public Administration Review* 46 (1): 57–66.
- Pierce, Neal, Johnson Curtis W., and John Stuart Hall. 1993. *Citistates: How Urban America Can Prosper in a Competitive World*. Washington D.C.: Seven Locks Press.
- Price, David E. 1978. "Policy Making in Congressional Committees: The Impact of "Environmental" Factors." *American Political Science Review* 72 (2): 548–574.
- Rusk, David. 1993. *Cities without Suburbs*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Sbragia, Alberta M. 1996. *Debt Wish: Entrepreneurial Cities, U.S. Federalism, and Economic Development*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Shattschneider, Elmer E. 1960. *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart / Winston.
- Smirnova, Olga, Suzanne M. Leland, and Gary A. Johnson. 2008. "Popular, but more influential? A test of whether special purpose governments affect federal transit financing." *Municipal Finance Journal* 28 (4): 43–61.
- Tiebout, Charles M. 1956. "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures." *Journal of Political Economy* 64 (5): 416–424.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2013. *2012 Census of Governments, Individual State Descriptions*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Wlezien, Christopher. *Journal of Politics*. "Patterns of Representation: Dynamics of Public Preferences and Policy." 2004 66 (1): 1–24.
- Zullo, Roland. 2008. "Transit Contracting Reexamined: Determinants of Cost Efficiency and Resource Allocation." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 18 (3): 495–515.