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Leah Brooks is Professor in the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration at the George Washington University and Director of the Center for Washington Area Studies. After receiving her PhD from UCLA in 2005, she taught at the University of Toronto and McGill University, and worked at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors.

Her work includes examining Business Improvement Districts and land assembly to understand the resolution of collective action problems, and analyzing the Community Development Block Grant program to understand the political economy of grant giving at the municipal and sub-municipal levels. Her research work also investigates the long-run impacts of streetcar investments in Los Angeles on urban form and an analysis of whether and why US infrastructure costs have increased.

She is currently working on understanding the long-run impacts of Washington, DC's 1968 civil disturbance and the impact of ecommerce on physical retail establishments.