

# **Blueprint for American Prosperity**

**Unleashing the Potential of a Metropolitan Nation**



## **Mountain Megas**

**America's Newest Metropolitan Places and a Federal Partnership to Help Them Prosper**

**National Release Forum**

**Bruce Katz and Robert Lang**

**July 22, 2008**

**Denver, CO**

# Mountain Megas

I

**Context**

II

**Mega-trends**

III

**Emerging challenges and opportunities**

IV

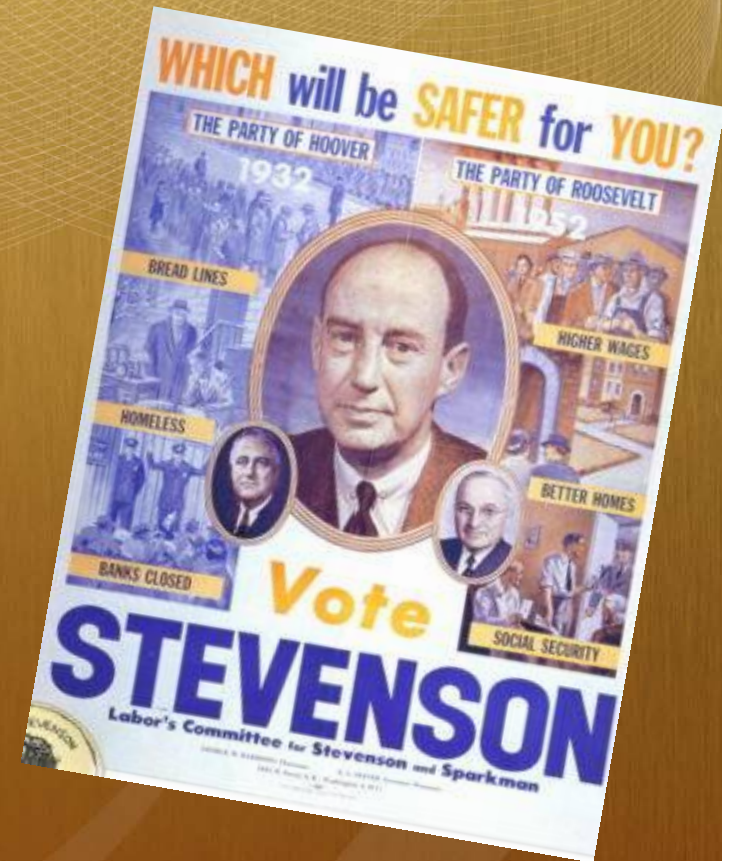
**A new federal-mega partnership**



This project comes at an historic  
political and economic moment



First election since 1952 without an incumbent





And, the country faces a number of  
imminent challenges

# Turmoil in the housing sector

1.1 million U.S. homes  
in foreclosure in 2007

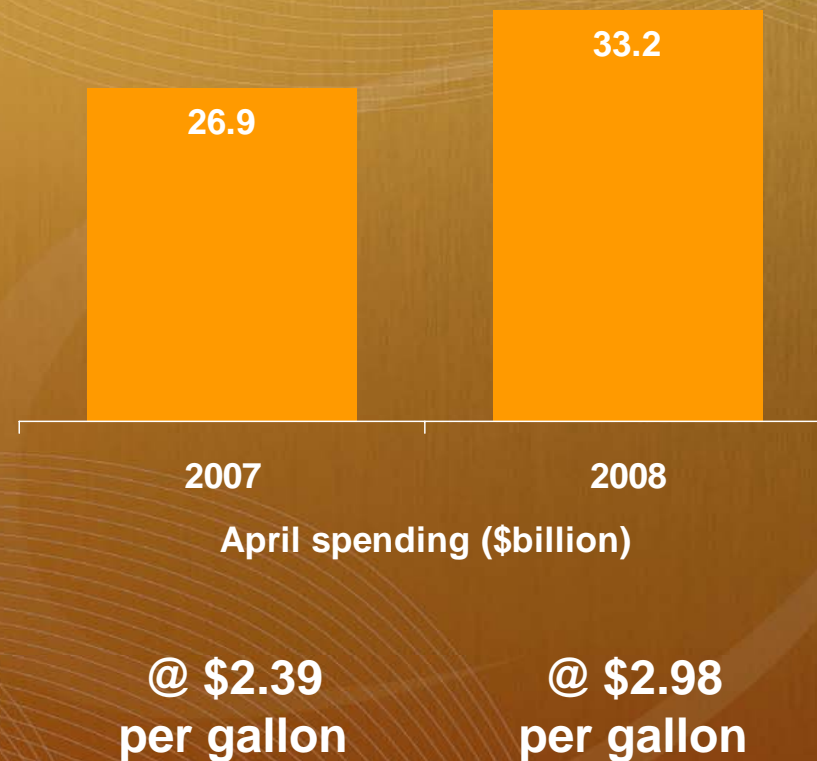
Foreclosure rates in top  
100 metros: #3 Las  
Vegas, #9 Denver, #22  
Phoenix





# Increased burden of fuel costs

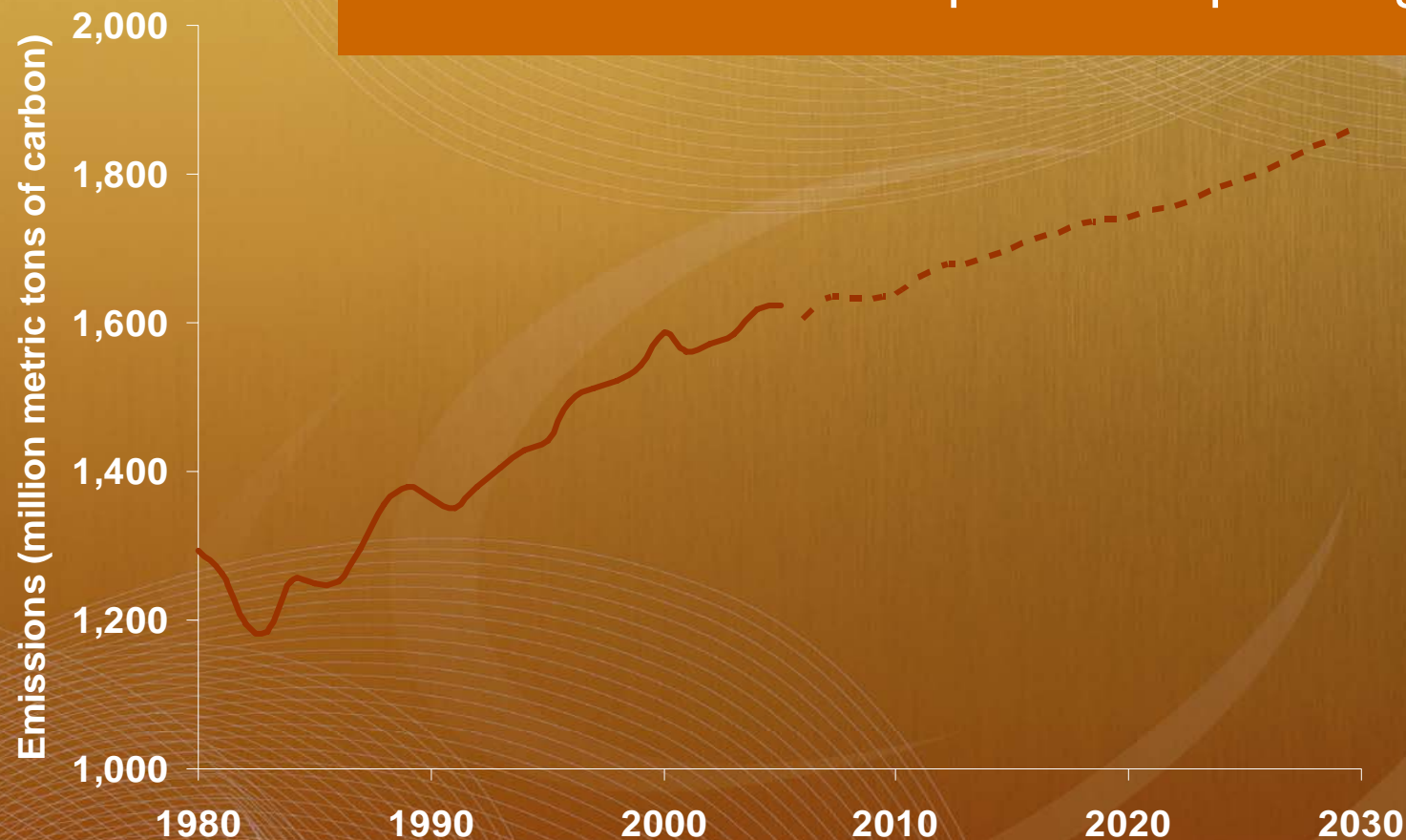
Spending on gasoline is up 23% in one year



Source: Energy Information Administration

# Existential threat of climate change

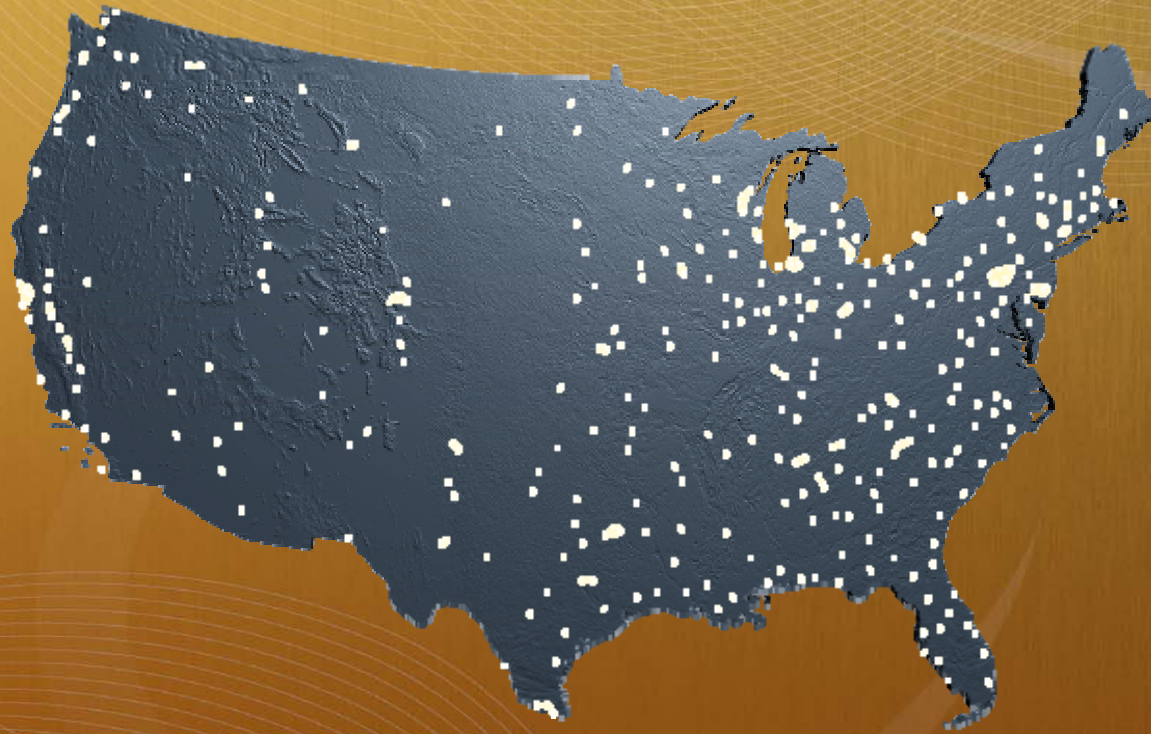
America's carbon footprint is expanding



Source: Energy Information Administration



# The U.S. needs a Blueprint for American Prosperity





# Productive growth

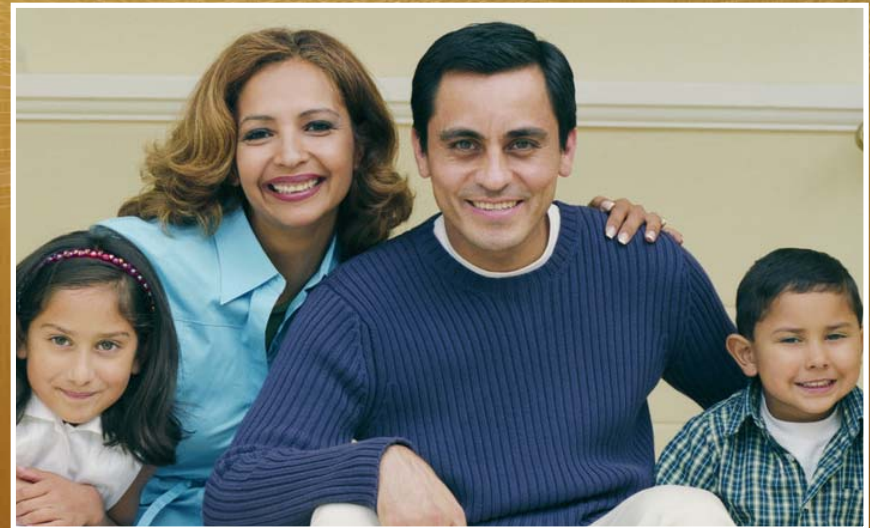
Boosts innovation and  
productivity and so  
generates quality jobs  
for more workers





# Inclusive growth

Fosters a strong middle class by addressing the training and education needs of an increasingly diverse population





# Sustainable growth

Promotes sensible urban form, reduces energy and water consumption, and protects the environment



by Denver RTD



Innovation

Human Capital

Quality Places

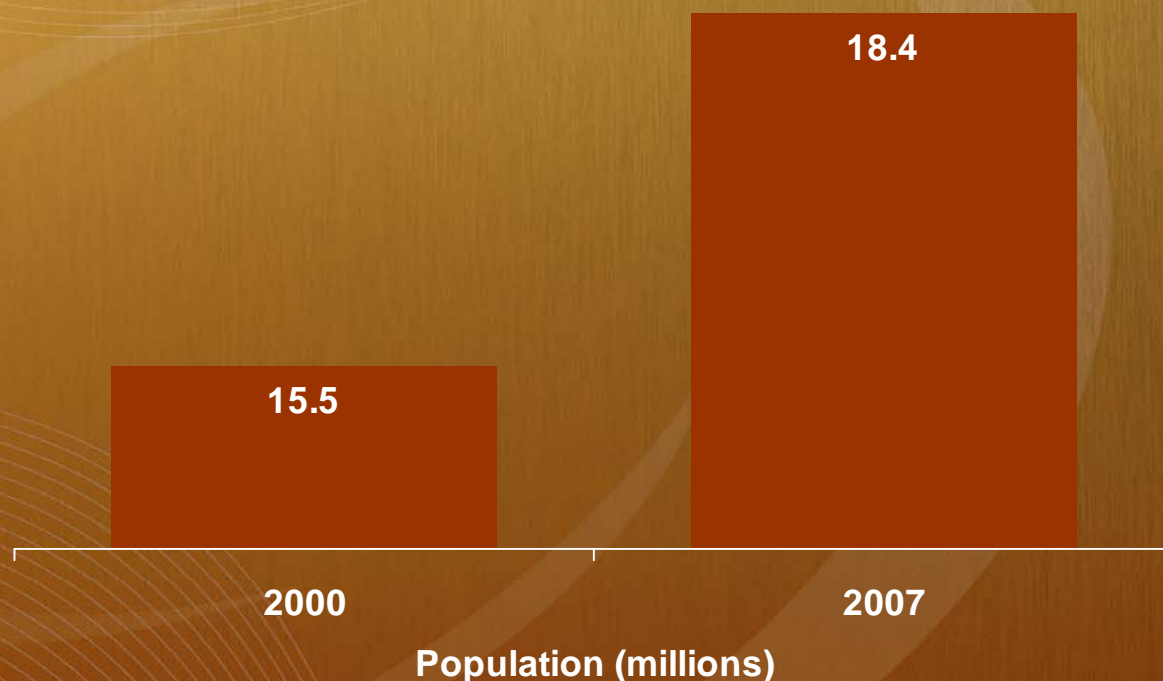
Infrastructure

# Why is Brookings interested in the Intermountain West?

Rapid change is enveloping the American West

Five state region grew  
by 19 percent from  
2000 to 2007

Captured 14 percent  
of the nation's growth



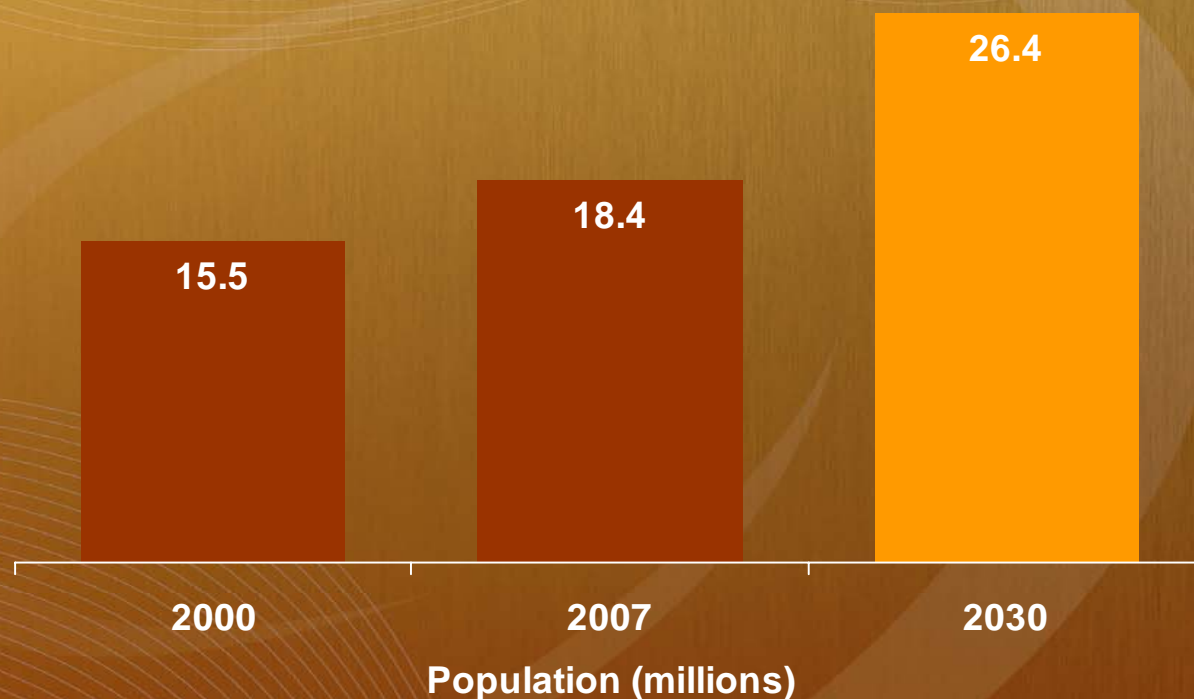
Source: Census Population Estimates



# Why is Brookings interested in the Intermountain West?

By 2030, the Intermountain West will gain another 13 percent of the nation's growth

Arizona will have more residents than Michigan and be on its way to surpassing Ohio by 2050

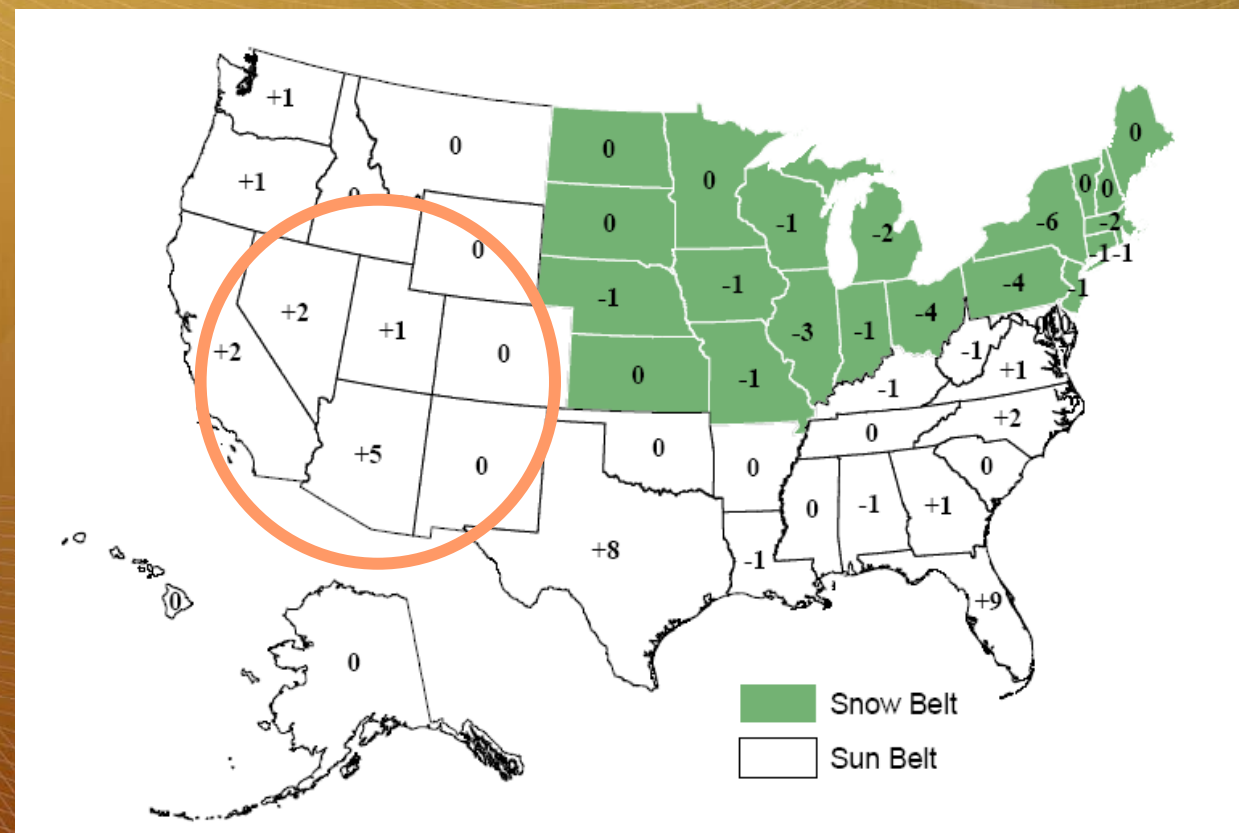


Source: Census Population Estimates

# Why is Brookings interested in the Intermountain West?

... giving the Intermountain West 8 new electoral votes

Electoral College  
Change, 2000 to  
2030

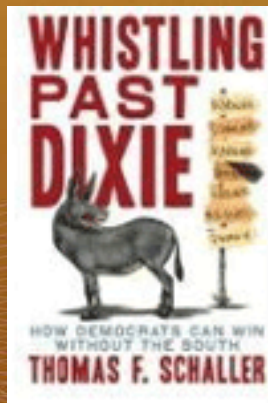




# Why is Brookings interested in the Intermountain West?

A new assertiveness and new politics make the Intermountain West central in '08 and beyond

- Increasingly contested



- “What’s happening now is the West has a voice and a real choice in the selection of the next President”  
—*Bill Richardson*



# About “Mountain Megas”

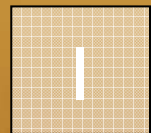
Introduces the concept of “megapolitan” areas, applied to the West

Analyzes growth trends, challenges, and opportunities in this light

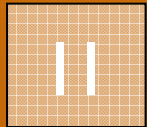
Advances a vision of a new federal-mega partnership that addresses necessary federal reforms while empowering rising megas of the West



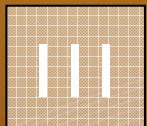
# Mountain Megas



**Context**



**Mega-trends**

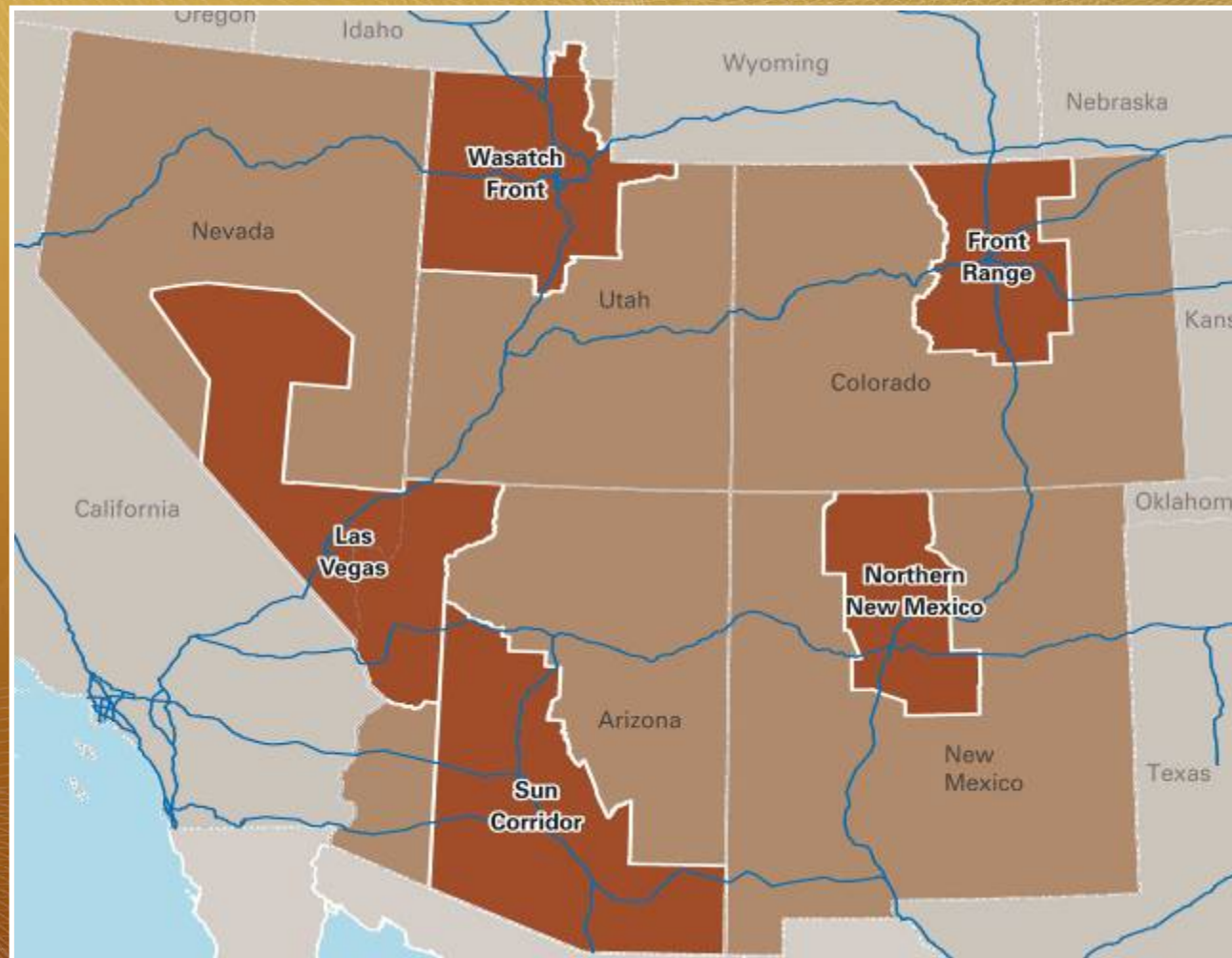


**Emerging challenges and opportunities**



**A new federal-mega partnership**

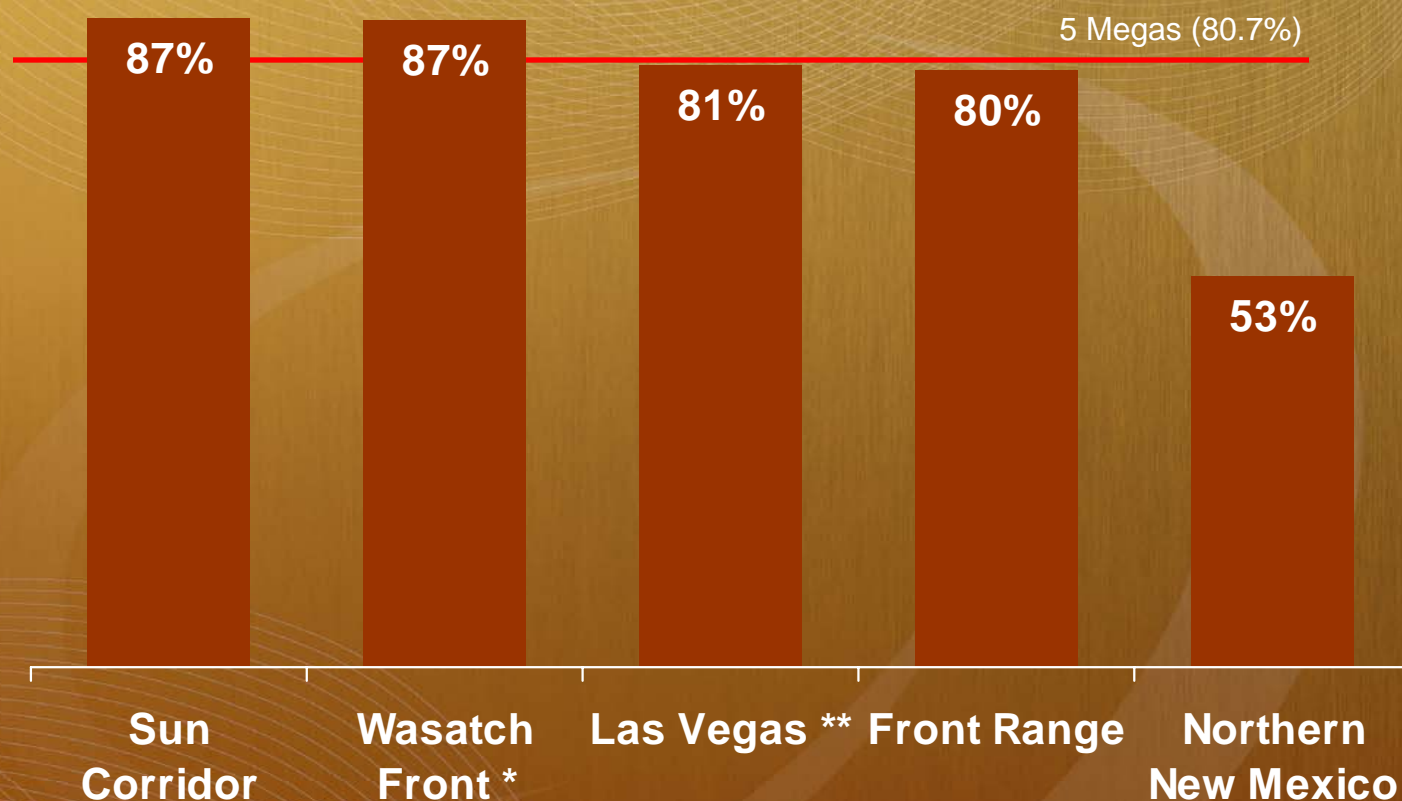
# We identified five megapolitan areas in the Intermountain West





# As a group, the Mountain megas represent four-fifths of the five states' population

Mega share of  
state population,  
2007



\*Number excludes portion of mega in Idaho

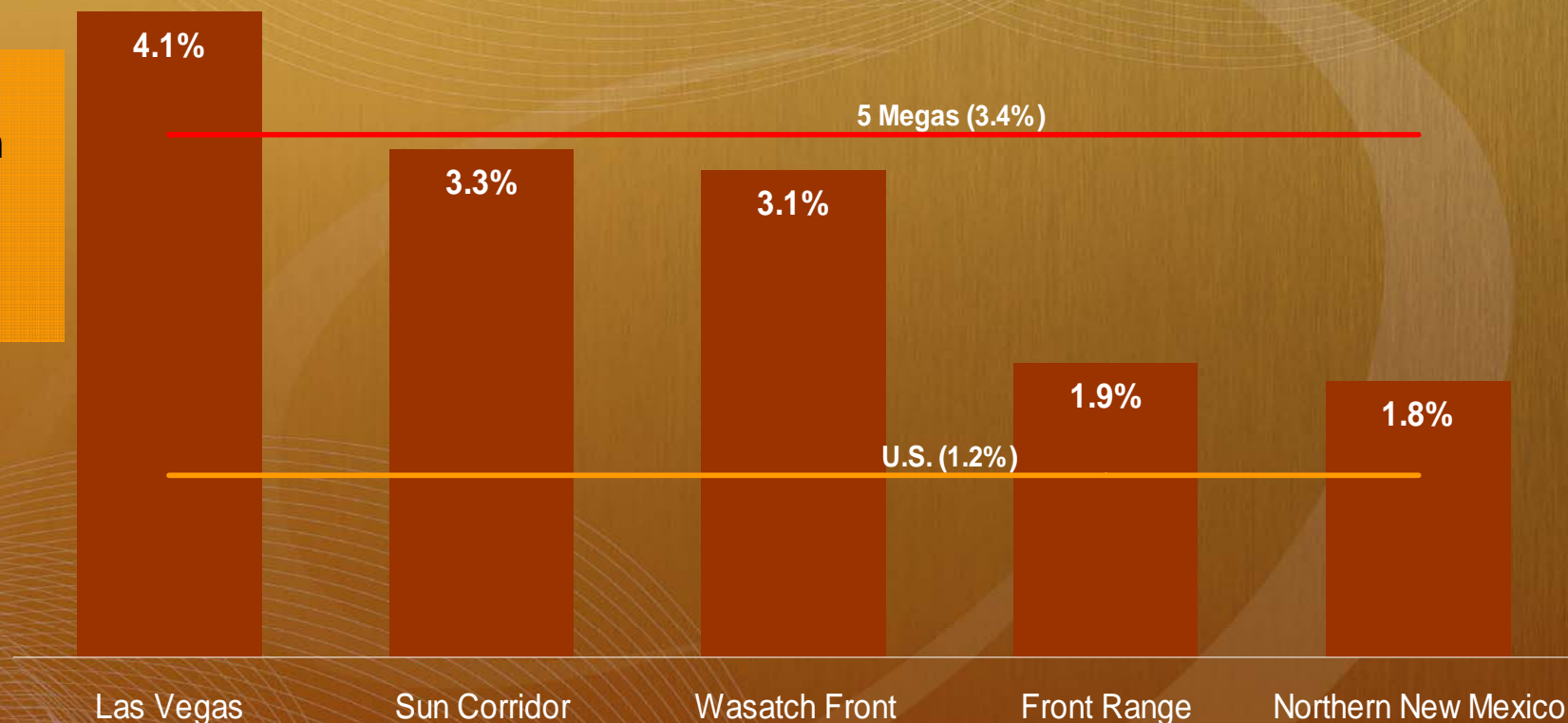
\*\*Number excludes portion of mega in Arizona

Source: Census Population Estimates

# The Mountain megas grew far faster than the national average

...and captured 13 percent of the nation's growth from 2000 to 2007

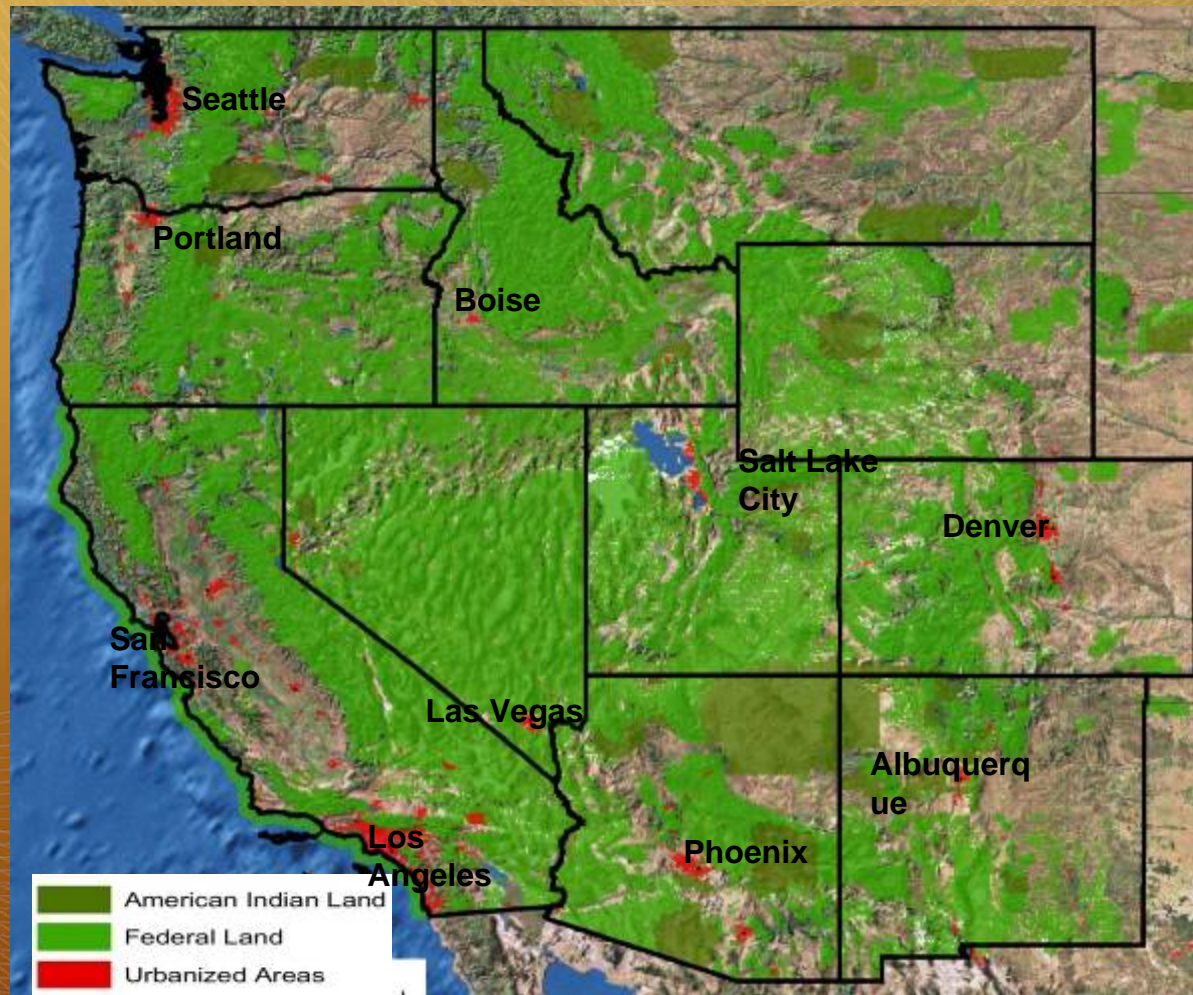
Annual  
population  
change,  
2000 to  
2007



Source: Census Population Estimates



The Mountain megas are highly bounded, often by public land





# Fully 86 percent of Mountain mega residents live at urban densities



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



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Infrastructure

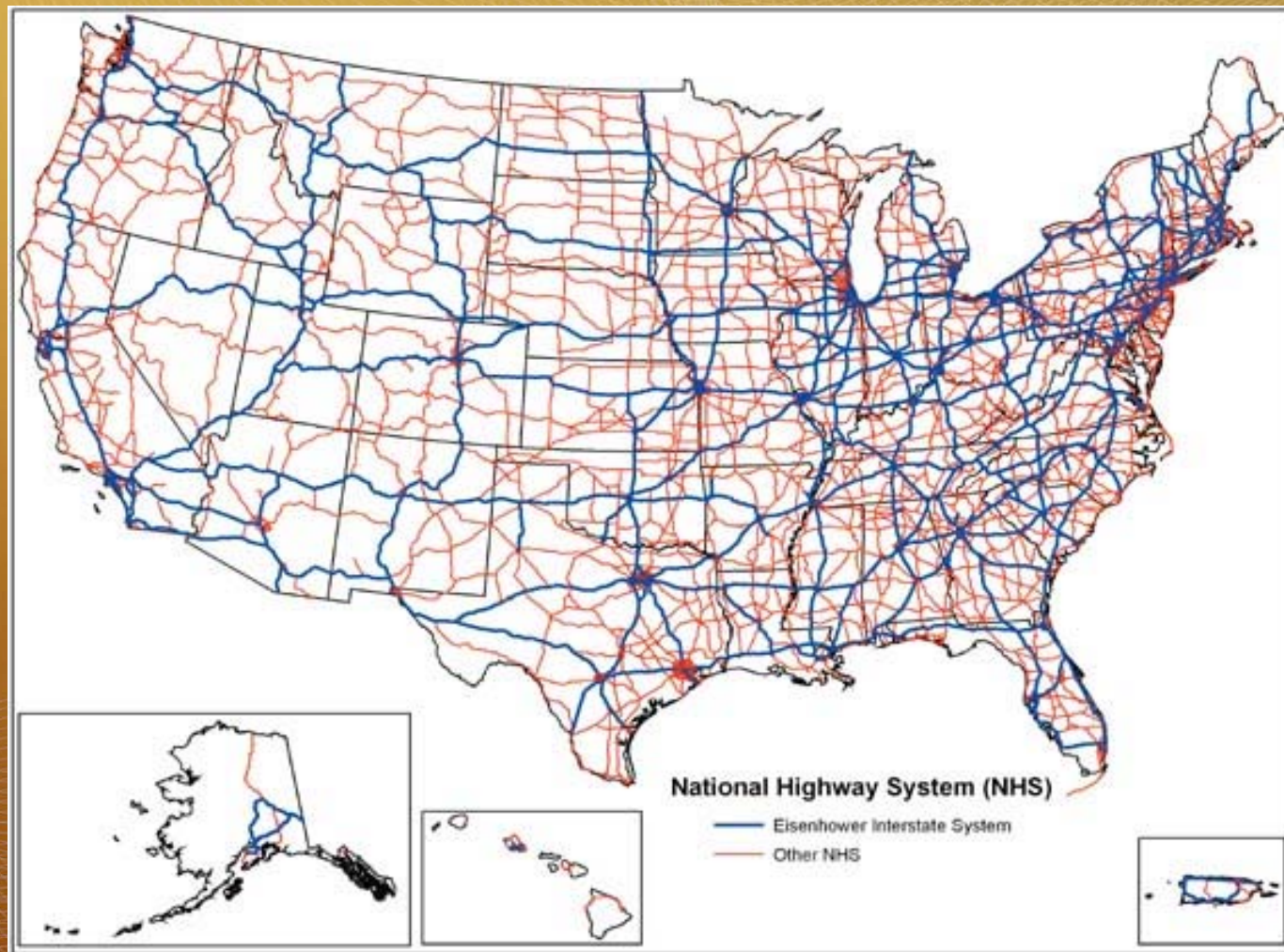
Innovation

Human Capital

Quality Places



Given their newness, the Mountain megas are undersupplied with Interstates



Source: Federal Highway Administration



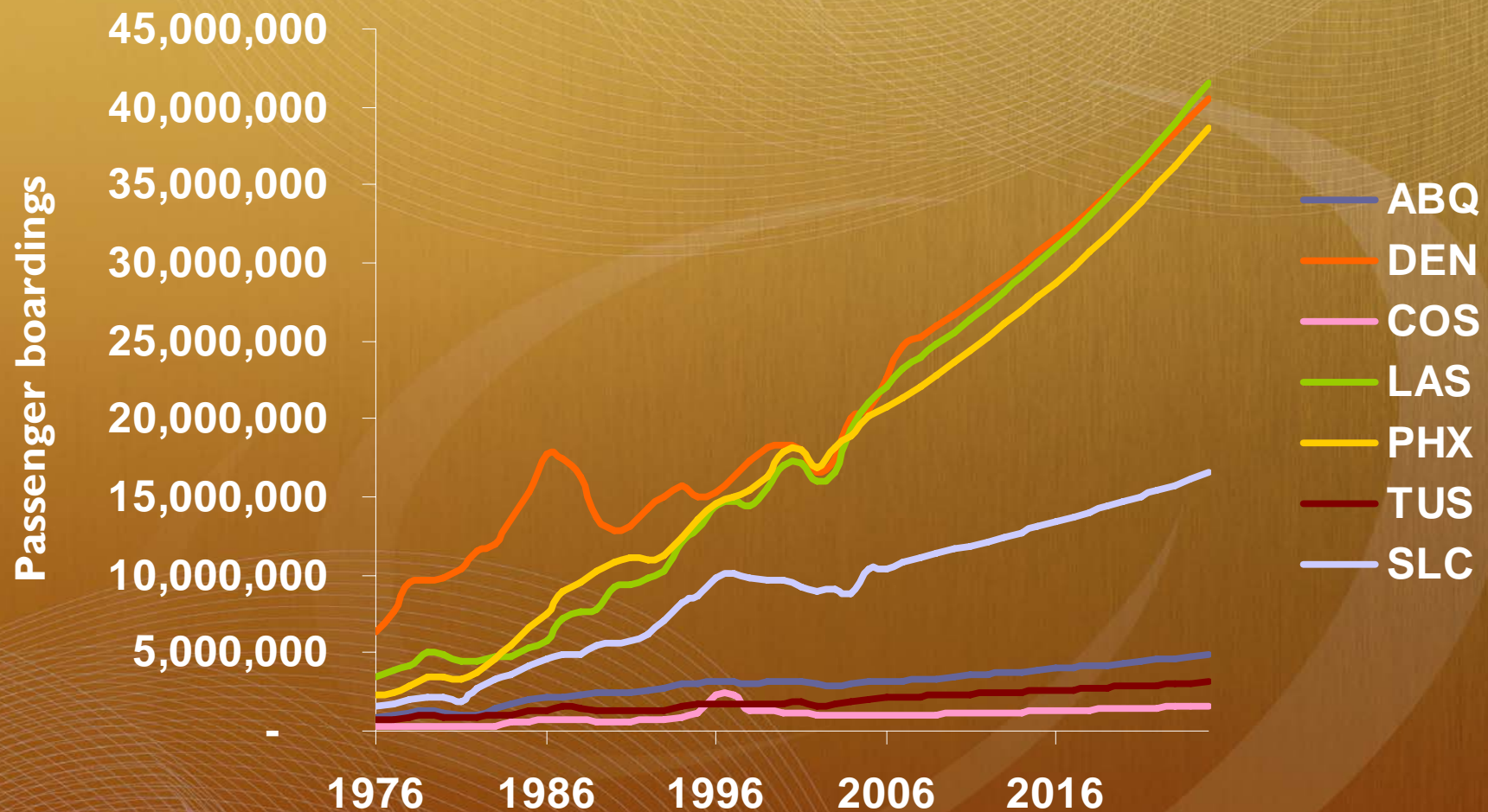
The Mountain megas are also undersupplied with intercity rail



Source: Amtrak Government Affairs Division



# Passenger boardings at Las Vegas, Denver, and Phoenix are expected to skyrocket



Source: Federal Aviation Administration Terminal Area Forecast

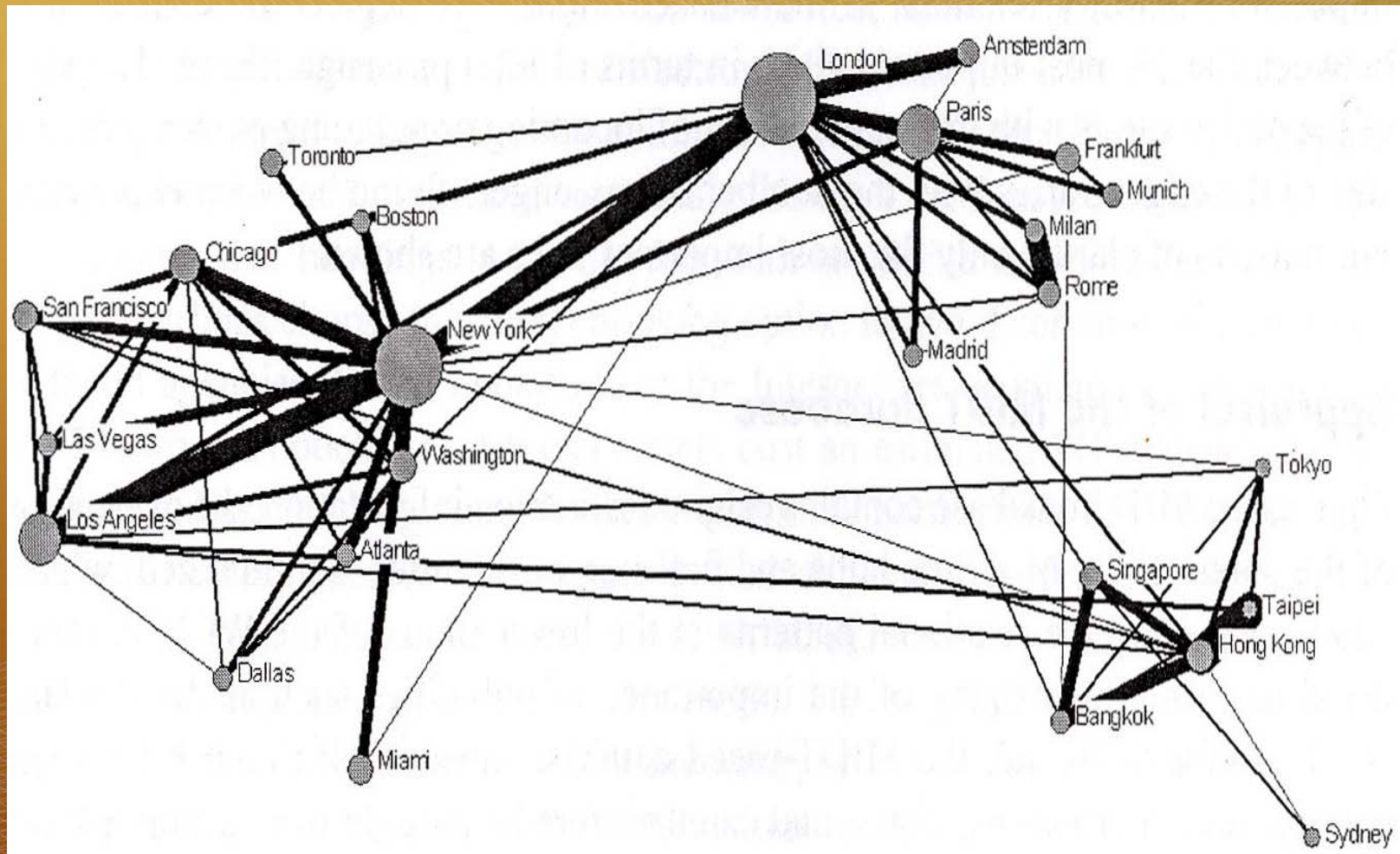
# Meanwhile, the region's metros are not as globally connected as other U.S. metros

**Selected metros ranked according to Global Network Connectivity Score**

<b>Metro</b>	<b>Global Network Connectivity Rank</b>
Miami	5
Atlanta	6
Dallas	9
Houston	10
<b>Denver</b>	<b>12</b>
Portland, OR	18
Indianapolis	21
Kansas City	22
<b>Phoenix</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Las Vegas</b>	<b>36</b>



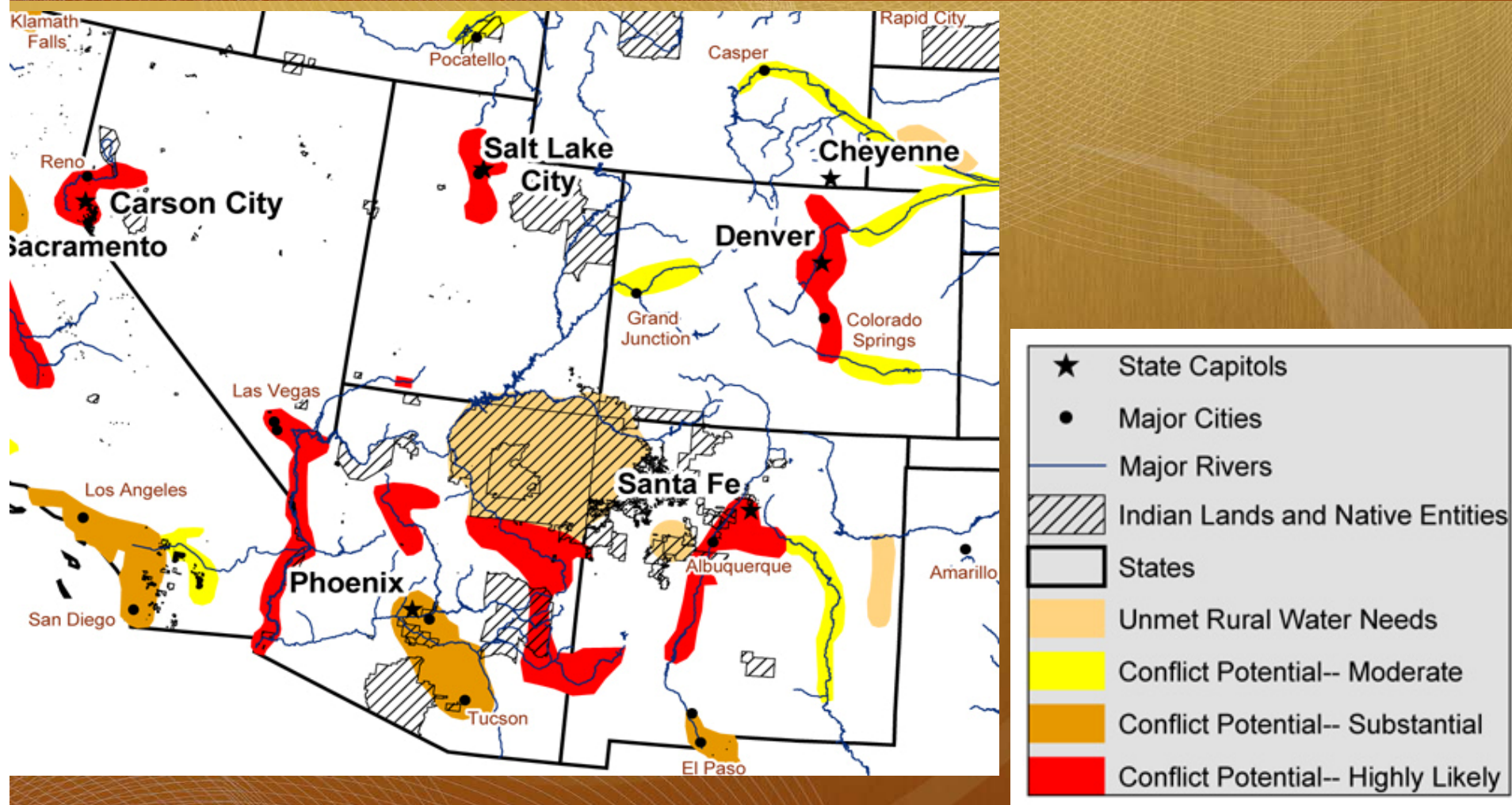
# Air links to the country and the world are thin



Source: Derudder and Wilcox, 2005



# Climate change may exacerbate water conflict



Source: U.S. Bureau of Reclamation



# Energy is in transition



Source: State of Utah; PNM



Infrastructure

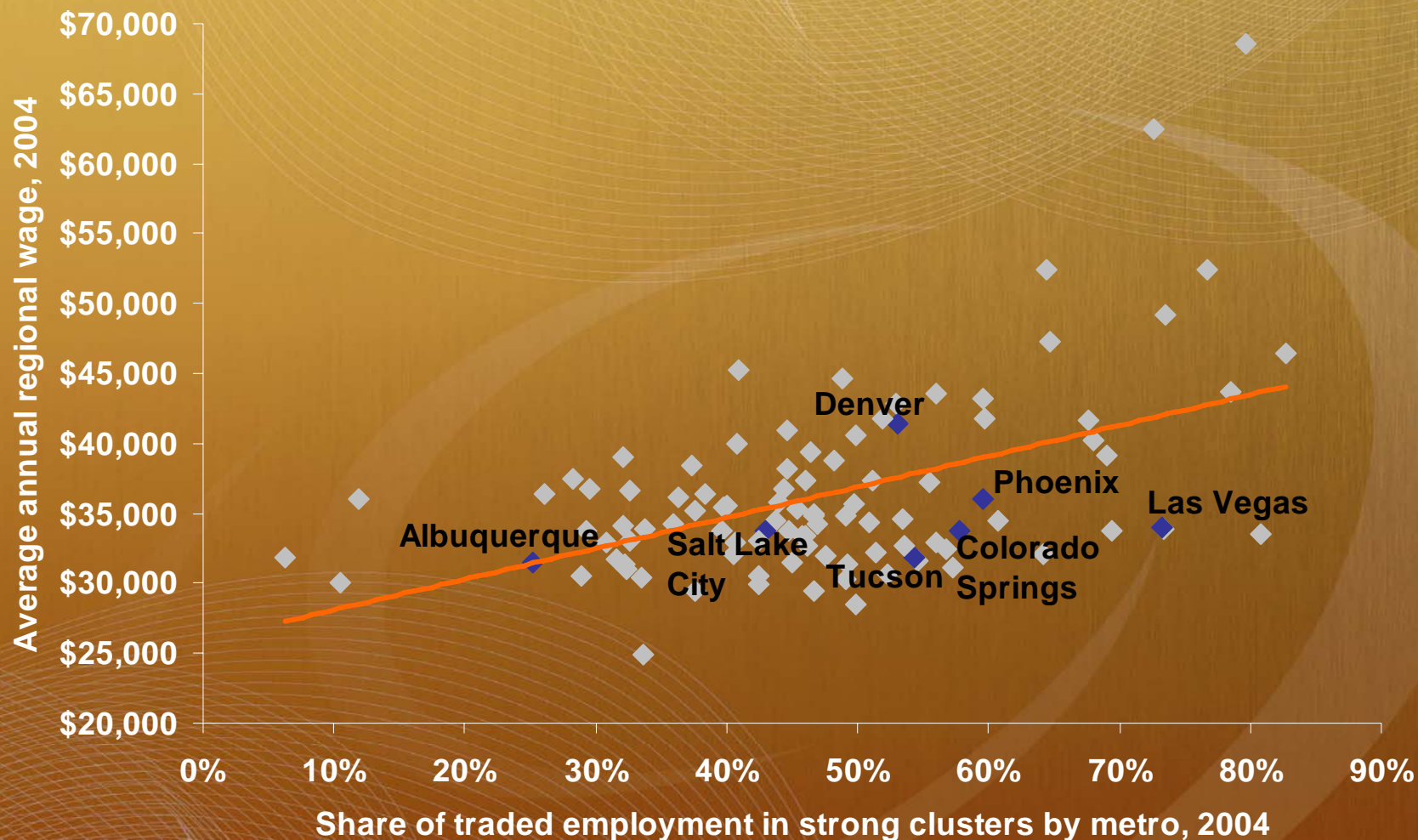
Innovation

Human Capital

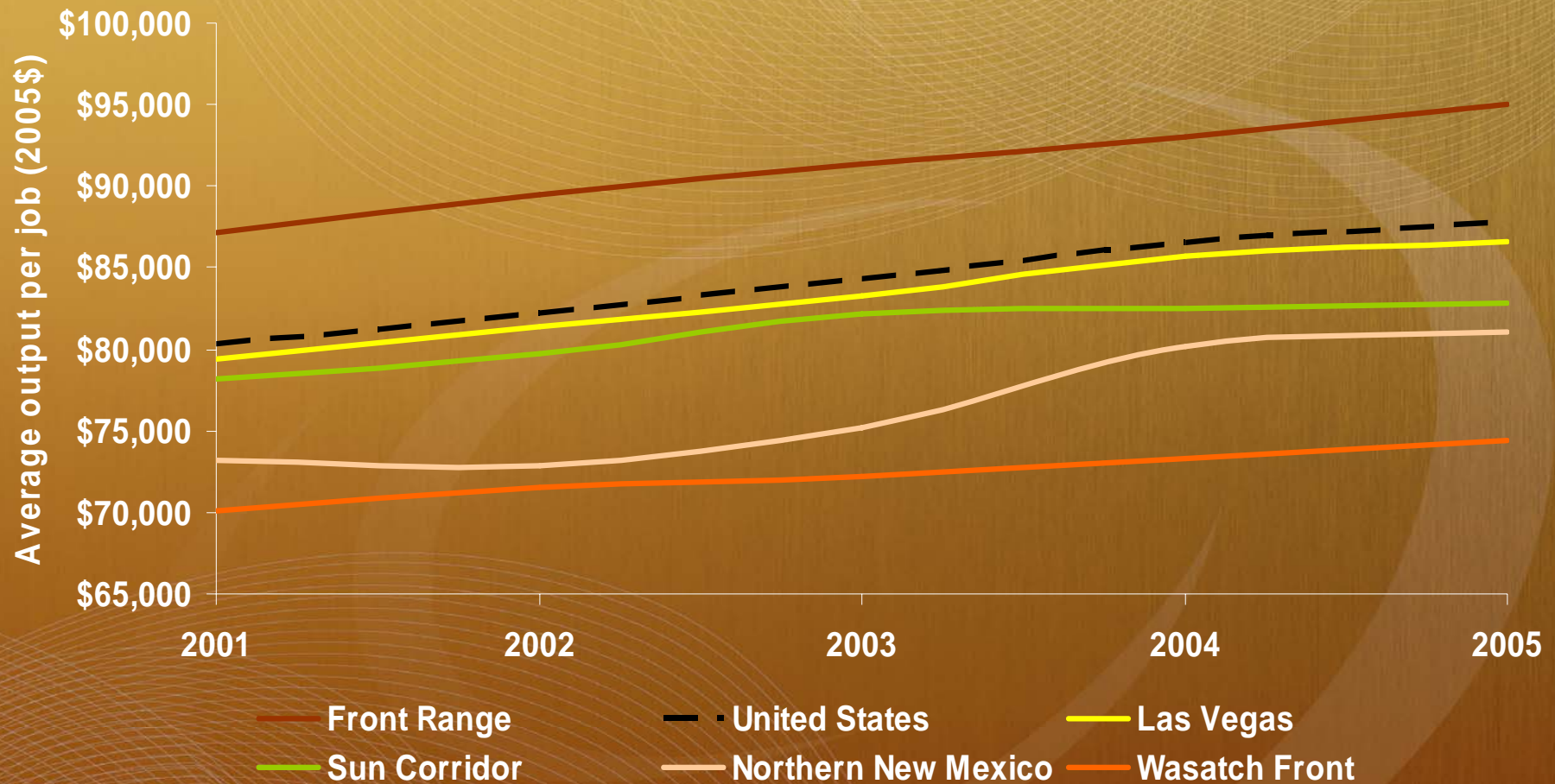
Quality Places



# Many metros are underperforming as generators of high wages



# Labor productivity trails the national average in all megas, except in the Front Range



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



Infrastructure

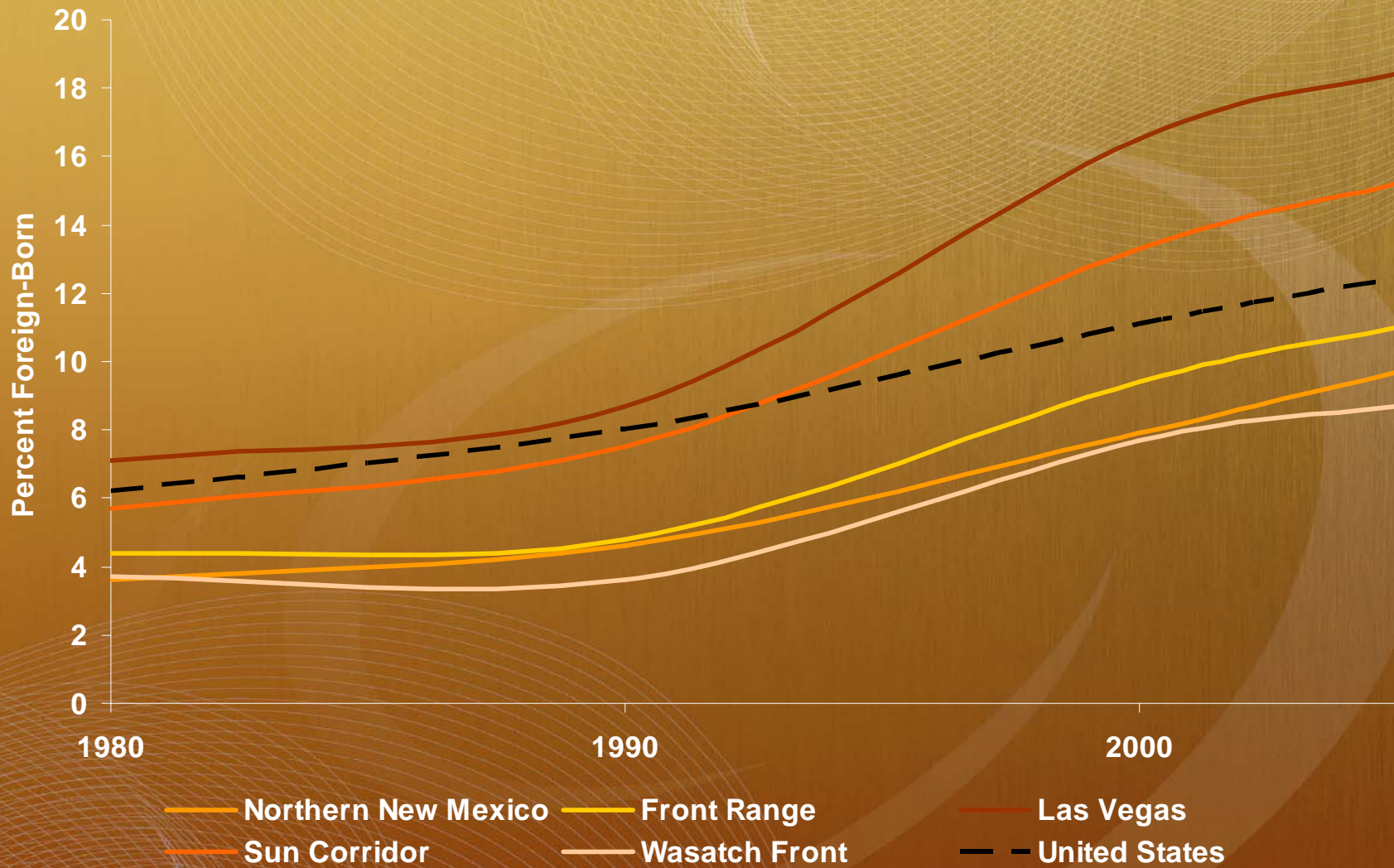
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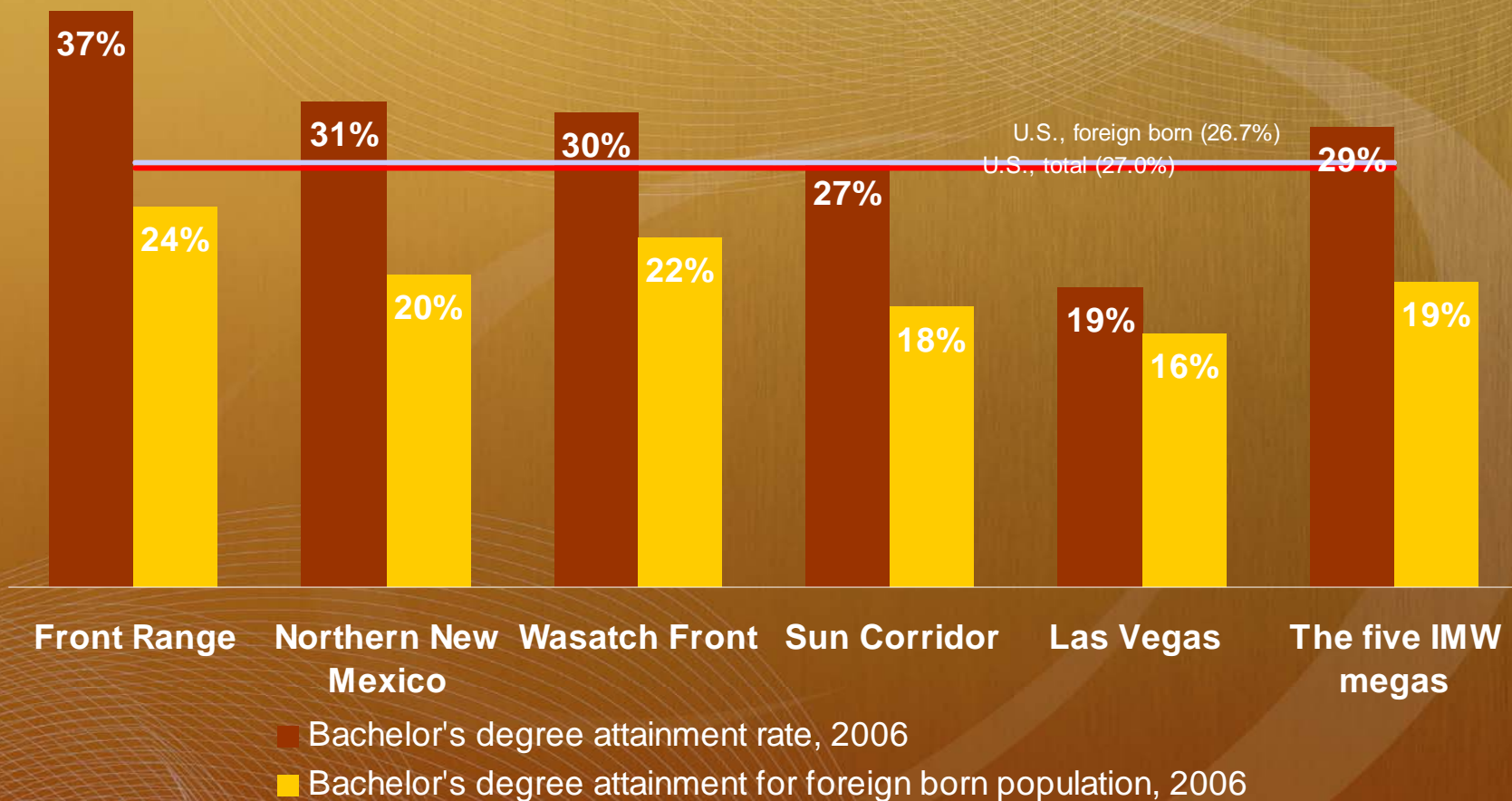
# Immigration is increasing the share of foreign-born residents



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

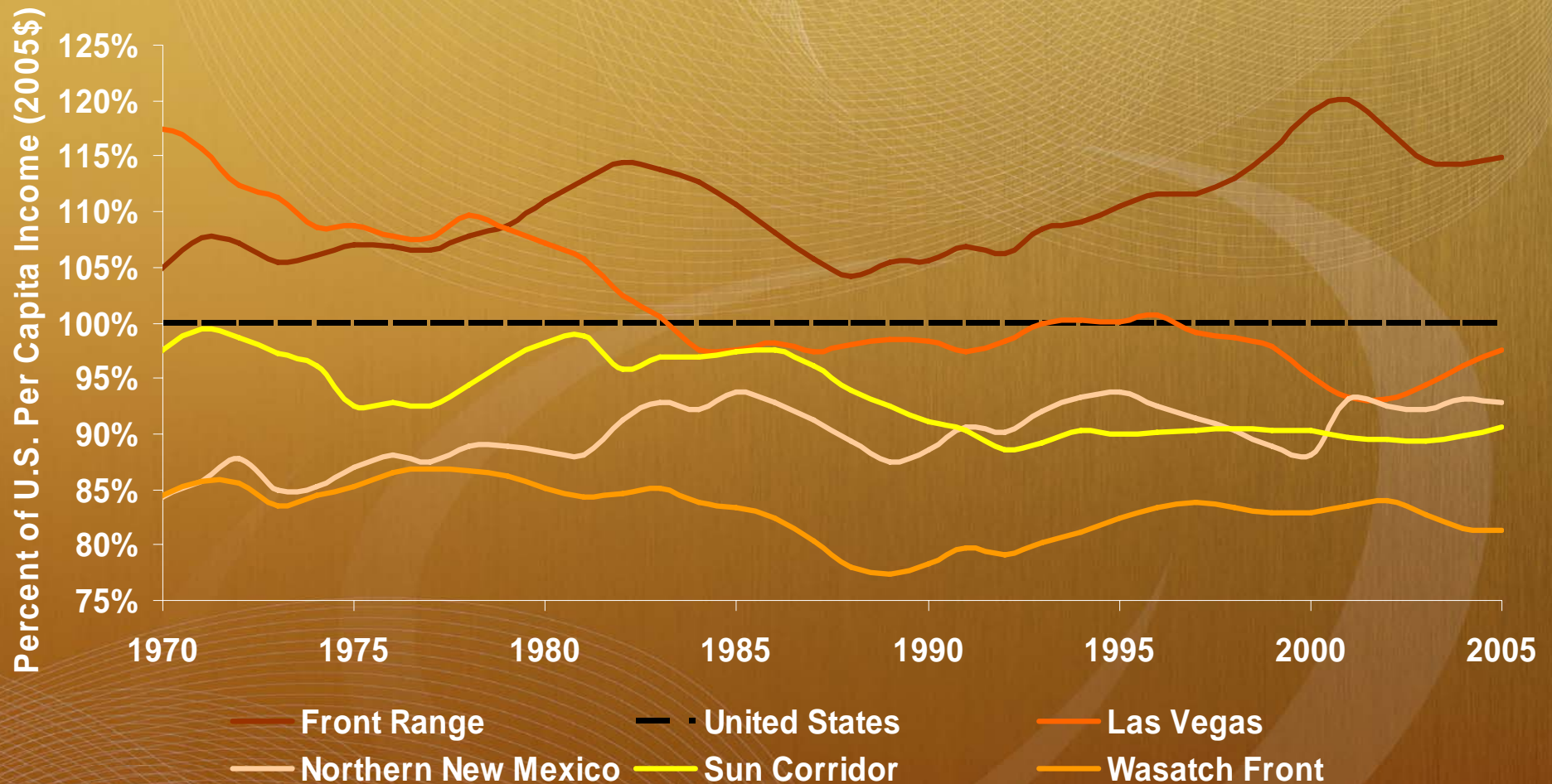


# Immigrants have less education than the full population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# Per capita income also trails the national average, except in the Front Range



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



Infrastructure

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# Transit is underdeveloped but there's a rail boom in the Mountain megas





# Poor mixing of uses depresses urban vitality



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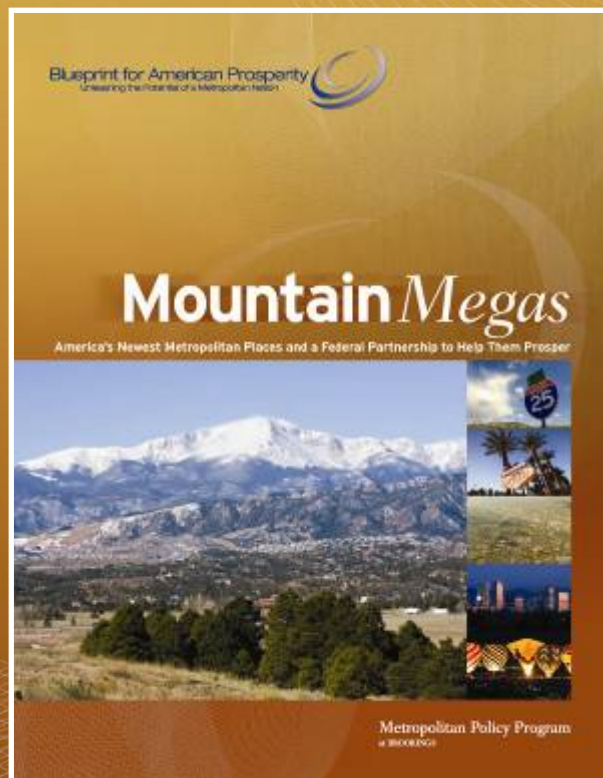
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**A new federal-mega partnership**



# A new federal-mega partnership

Mega leaders can do a lot but they cannot “go it alone”



Need a steady, supportive federal partner to lead where it must...

Infrastructure, R&D, immigration, climate change

...and empower megas where it should

# A new federal-mega partnership

## Infrastructure



Bring the transportation network to scale, smartly

Proactively address enormous resource challenges



# A new federal-mega partnership

## Innovation



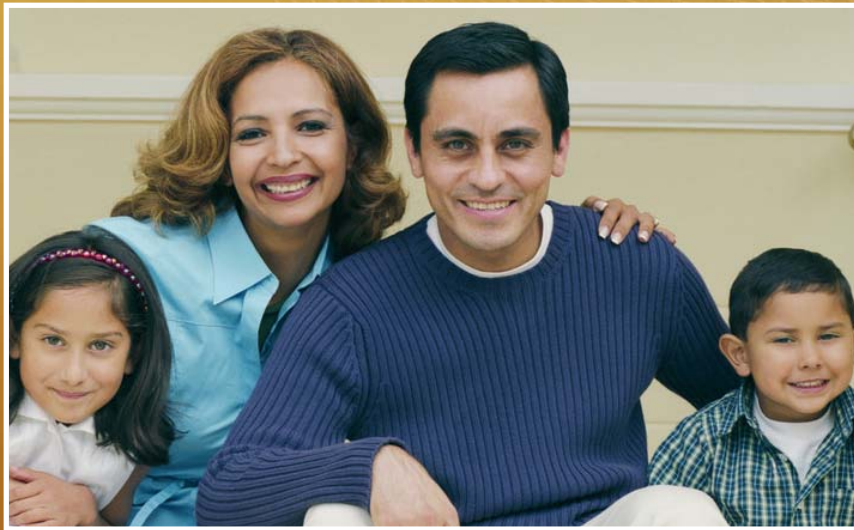
Leverage the region's sci-tech research capacity

Help the region build up its megapolitan export clusters

Experiment with new energy research paradigms

# A new federal-mega partnership

## Human capital



Deliver balanced, workable  
immigration reform

Support capable, productive,  
diverse middle-class workforce



# A new federal-mega partnership

## Quality places



by Denver RTD

Invest in supportive public transportation

Incentivize energy- and resource-efficient land use and building design

Issue a sustainability challenge

# A new federal-mega partnership

## Governance

Issue a governance challenge





# For More Information

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