



Metropolitan *Las Vegas*
Challenges, Opportunities, and a Vision

University of Nevada – Las Vegas

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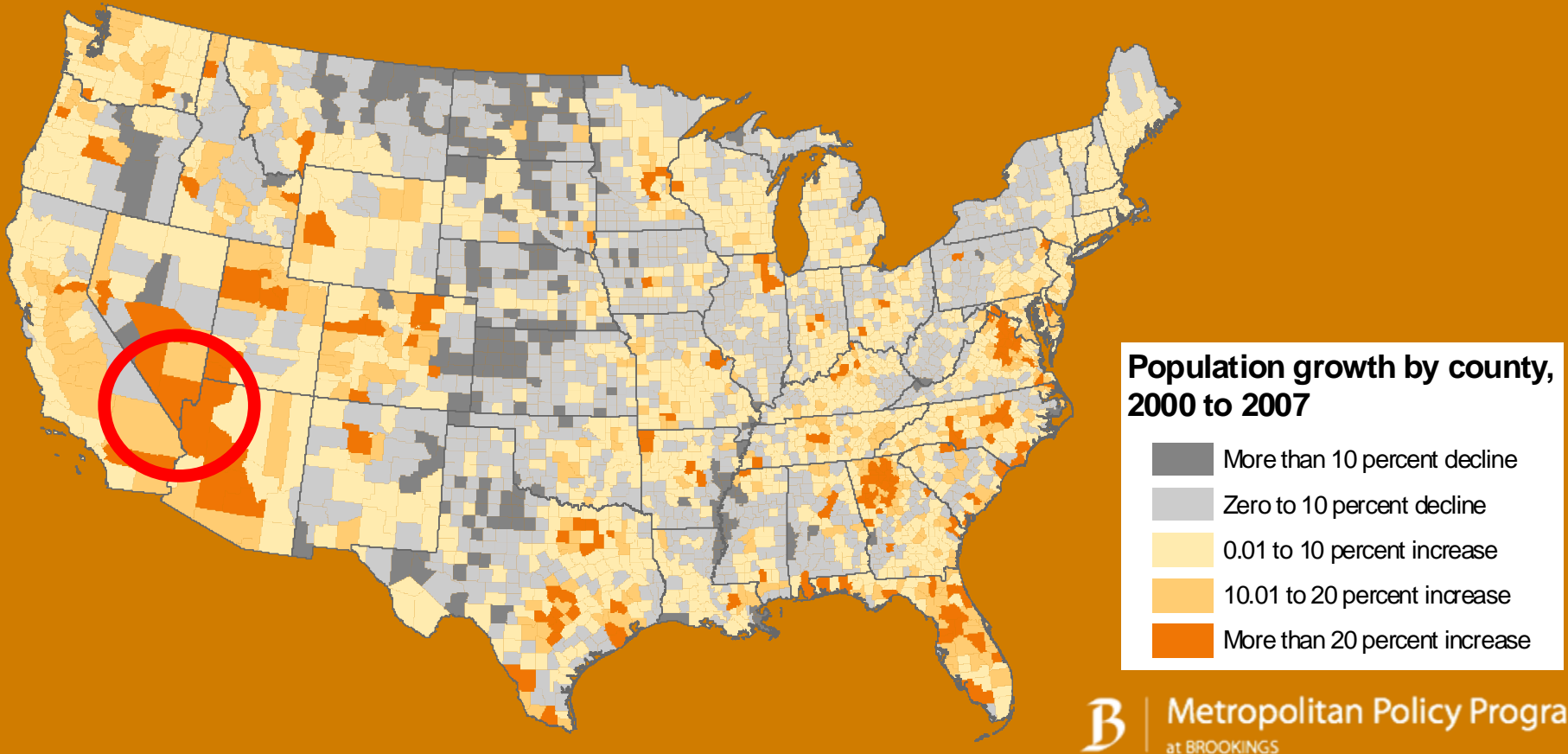
Why we are here

Challenges and emerging opportunities

A vision

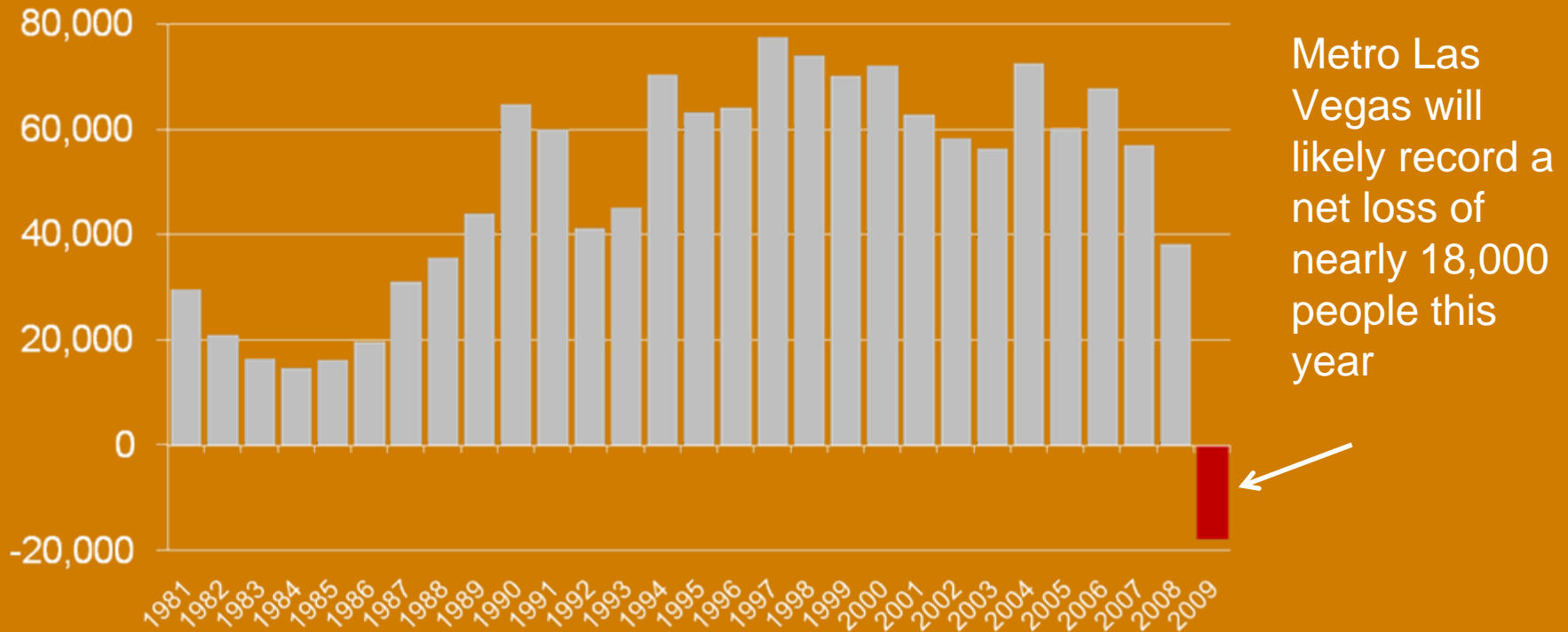
One reason is growth

Metro Las Vegas grew by 17 percent between 2000 and 2007 (or 2.5 percent a year!)



One reason is growth

Since then, however, growth has slowed precipitously—and for now has turned negative



Another is the invention here in the Mountain region of new urban forms



And we're here because you're at ground zero of the world economic crisis



In this regard, there is growing consensus
the nation's economies need to reposition



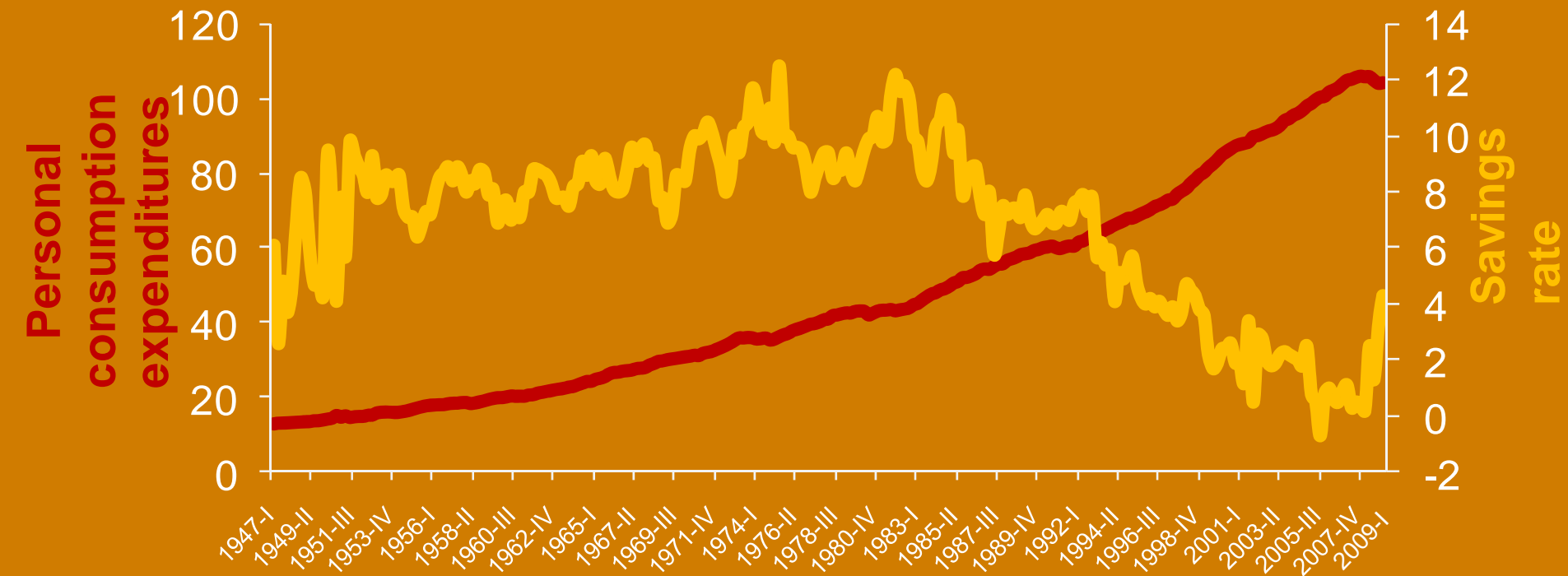
Getty Images

*“The rebuilt American
economy must be more
export-oriented and
less consumption-
oriented”*

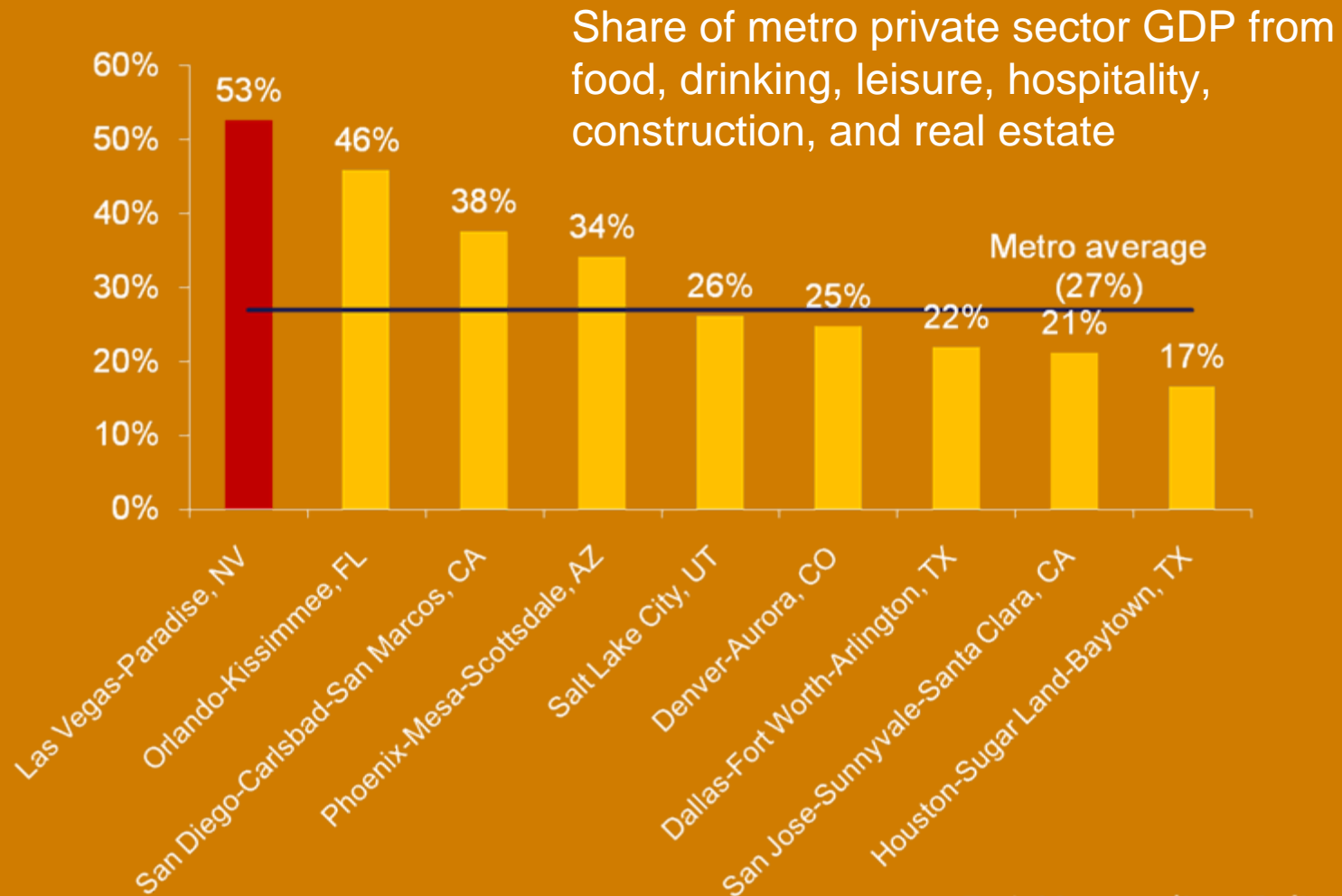
-Lawrence Summers,
Director, National
Economic Council



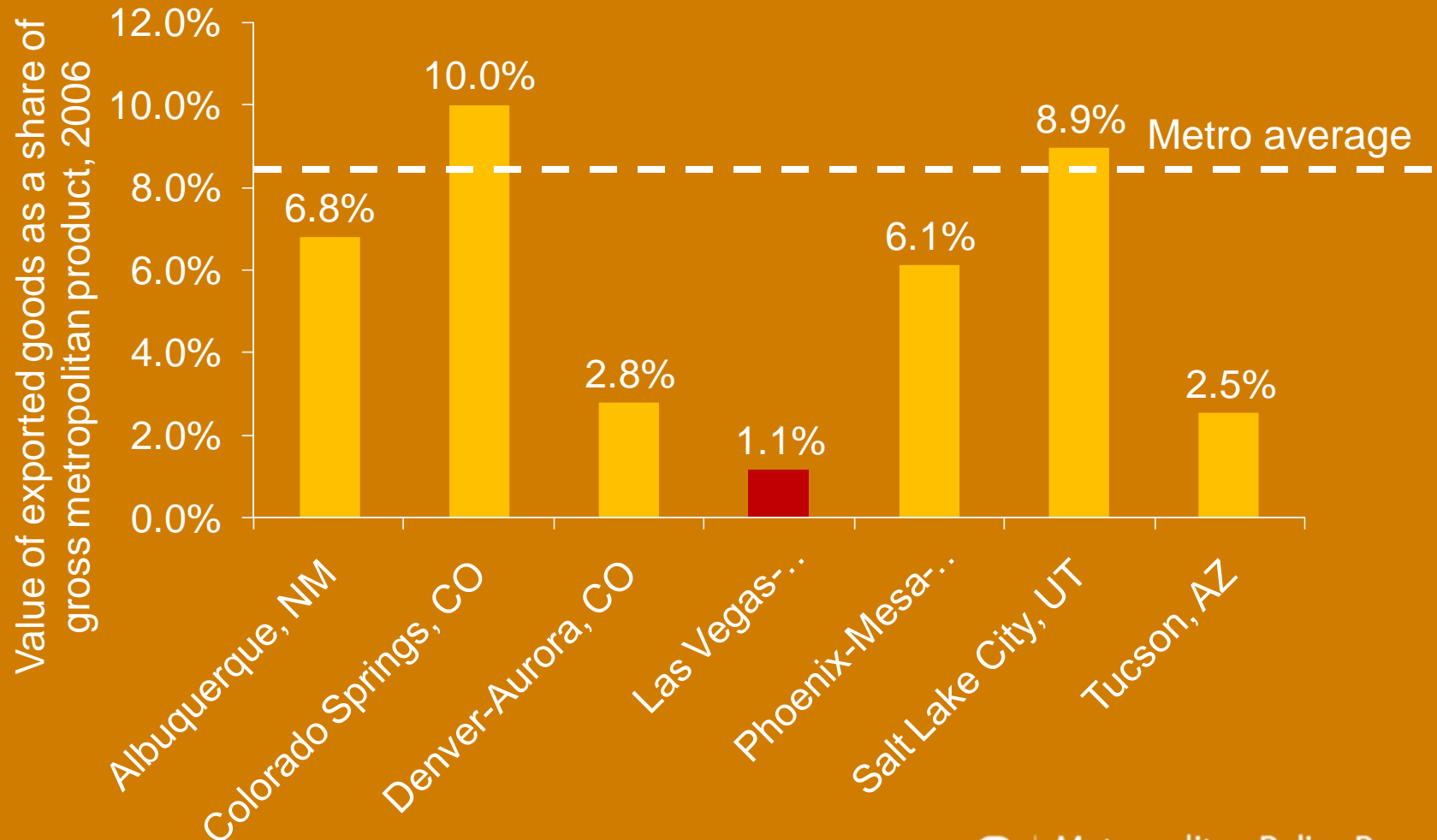
And indeed, consumption is down nationally and the savings rate is rising



Yet, this is problematic given Las Vegas' hyper-dependency on consumption



In fact, Las Vegas exports very few hard goods beyond consumption



All of which means:

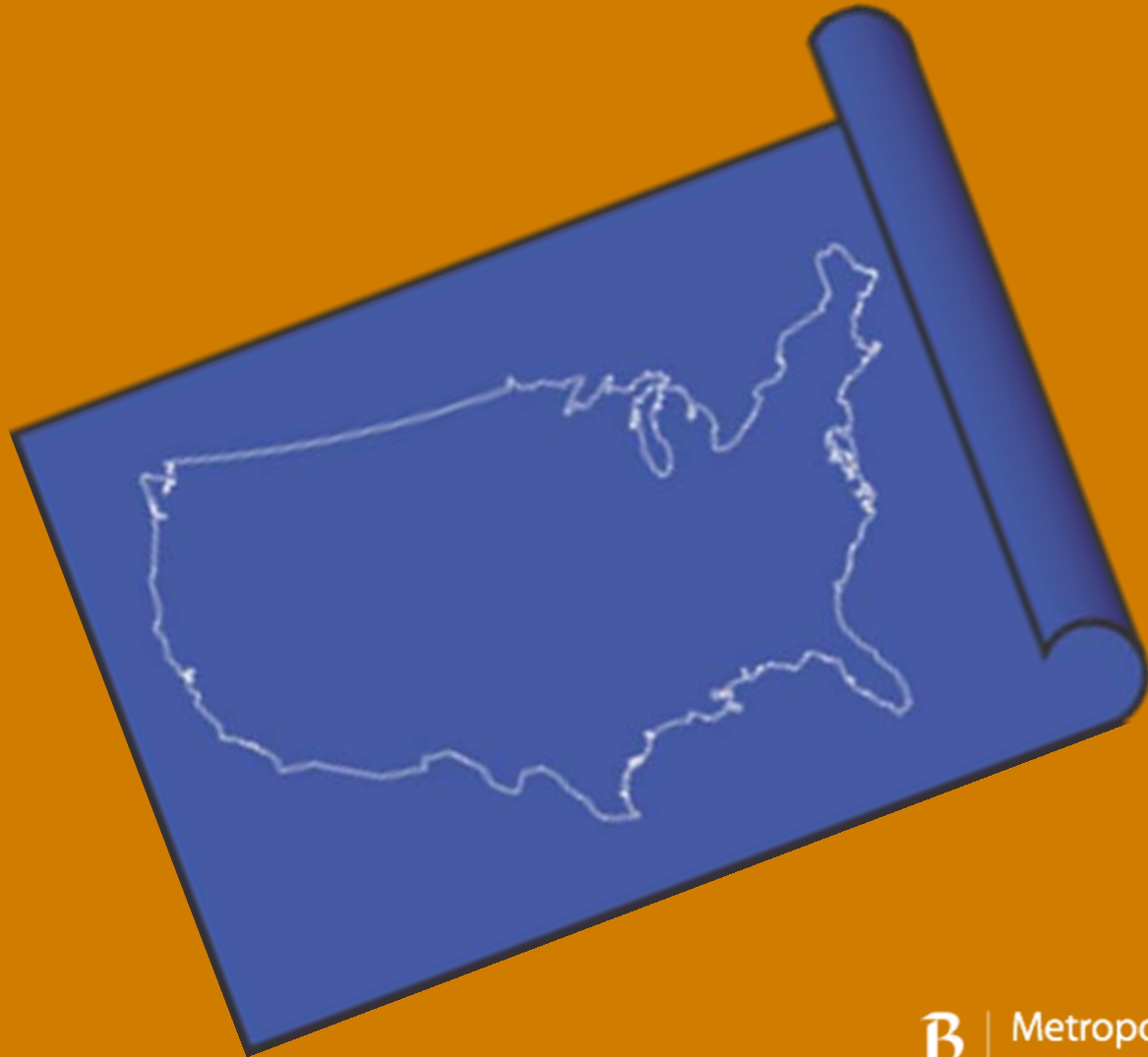


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To help places assess their standing, we have developed a *Blueprint for American Prosperity*



The *Blueprint* is a deep-going prosperity analysis framework and federal policy agenda for metros



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According to the *Blueprint*, true prosperity depends on achieving three types of growth

Productive growth

that boosts innovation and productivity and so generates quality jobs and rising incomes



Inclusive growth

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



Sustainable growth

that promotes sensible urban form, reduces resource consumption and emissions, and protects the environment



To achieve these goals, the nation must leverage four key assets and improve regional governance

Infrastructure

Innovation

Human Capital

**Sustainable, Quality
Places**

+

**Improved governance
networks**



Infrastructure matters...

...because high-quality transportation, transmission, and telecommunications networks are critical to moving goods, power, ideas, and workers quickly and efficiently



Innovation matters...

...because the ability to invent and exploit new products, processes, and business models is critical for boosting productivity and competing globally



Human capital matters...

...because innovation and the demands of a more competitive economy require a workforce with education and skill levels that are continuously rising



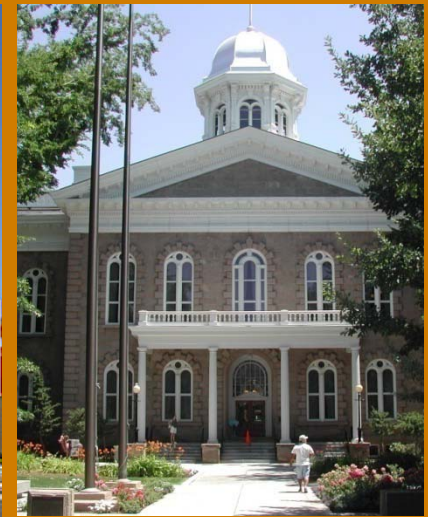
Sustainable, quality places matter...

...because the new economic order and desire for environmental sustainability re-values dense forms, distinctive neighborhoods, and vibrant downtowns



Beyond that, improved regional governance matters...

...because wider-reaching, region-scaled networks are necessary to match the boundary-crossing, dynamic problems of the new reality



So how is Las Vegas doing?

Las Vegas faces serious challenges... but it also has momentum

Infrastructure

Innovation

Sustainable, Quality Places



Like the other Mountain metros, greater Las Vegas is underserved by interstates

Las Vegas and Phoenix are the largest two adjacent metros not served by an interstate highway



I-15—linking Las Vegas and LA—offers only two lanes each direction in some places

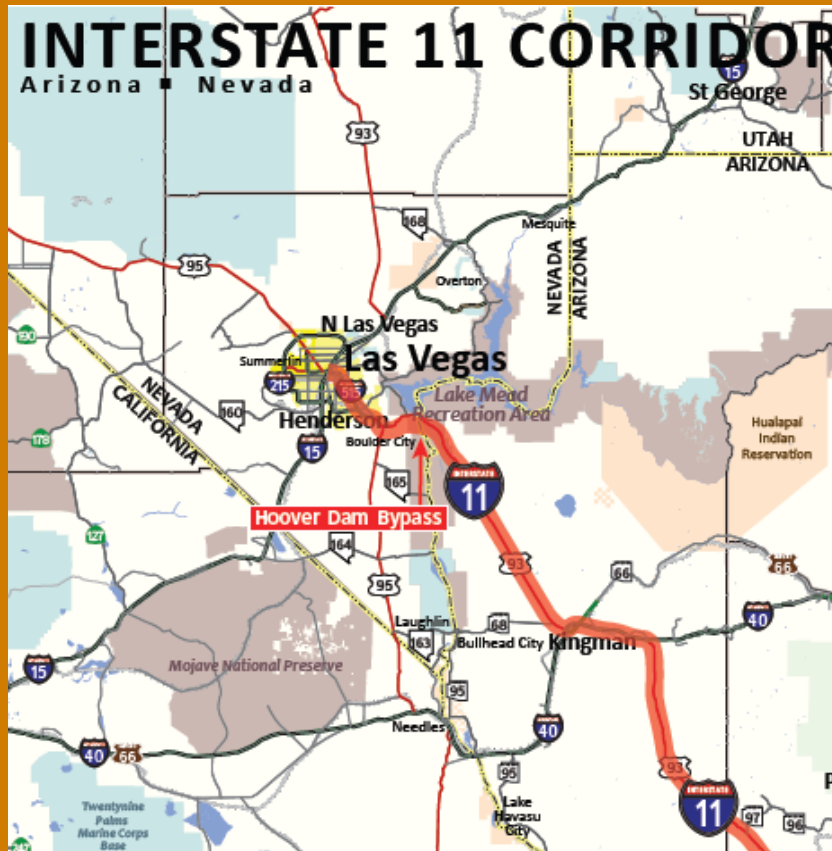


Greater Las Vegas and the rest of the megas are also undersupplied with intercity rail

The lack of rail service between Las Vegas and cities such as Los Angeles and Phoenix results in long travel times on strained highways



And yet, “Mountain Megas” has helped reenergize discussions of I-11



A high speed rail link with southern California is now in the mix



And McCarran International Airport remains a world class asset



The hub ranked as America's 6th busiest airport in 2008, just behind fifth-place Denver and ahead of 10th-place Phoenix

Challenges

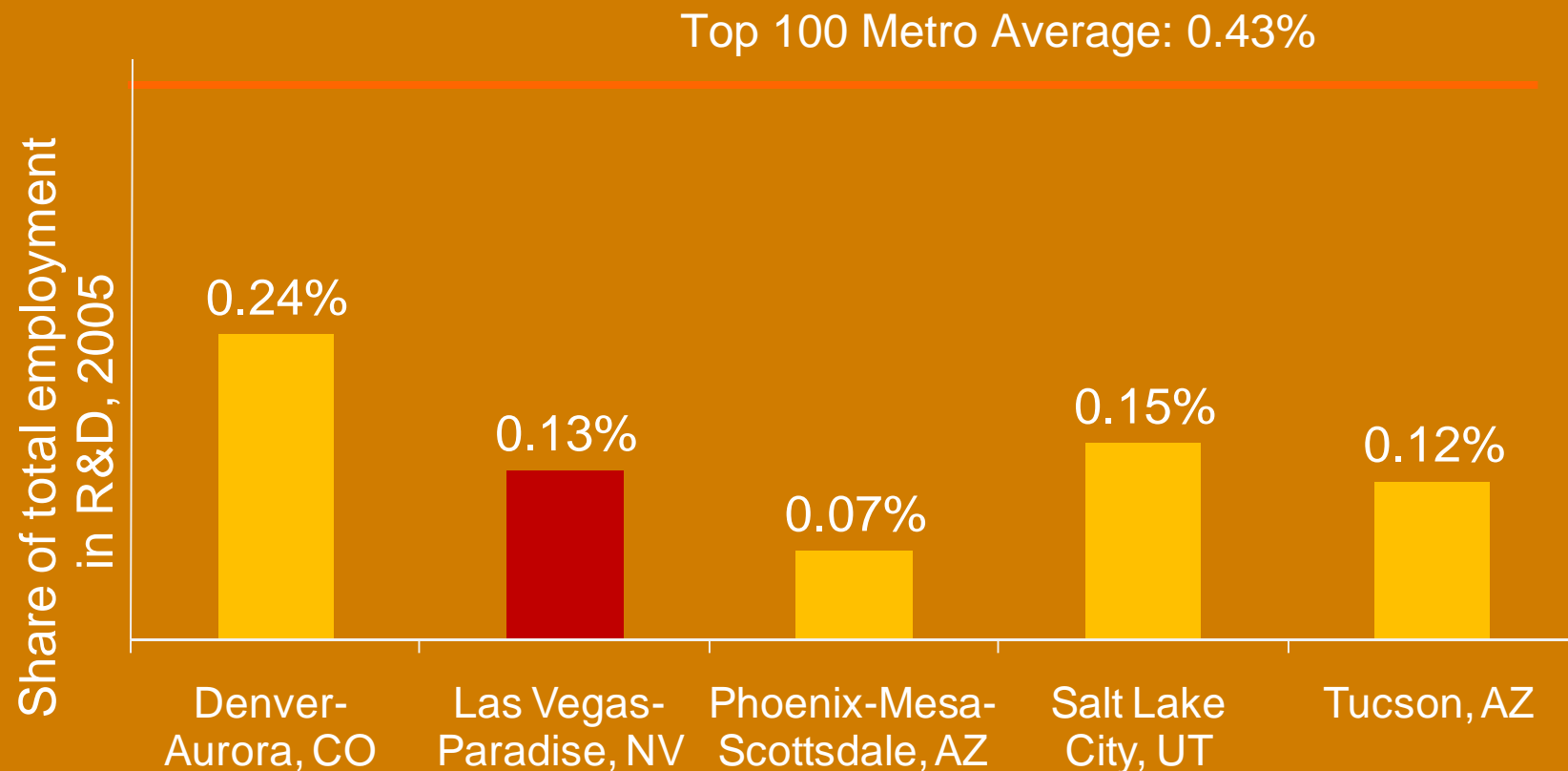
Infrastructure

Innovation

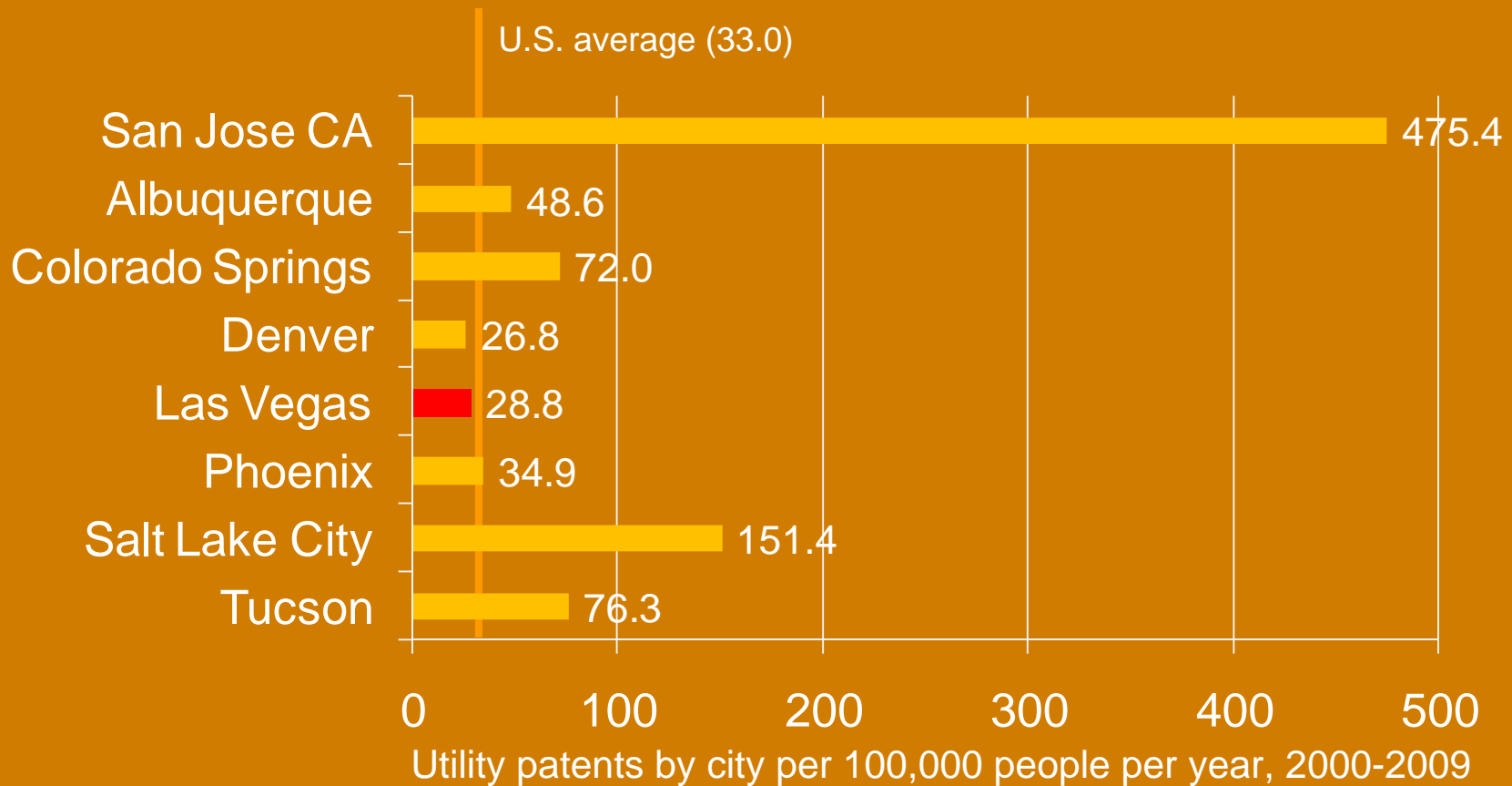
Sustainable, Quality Places



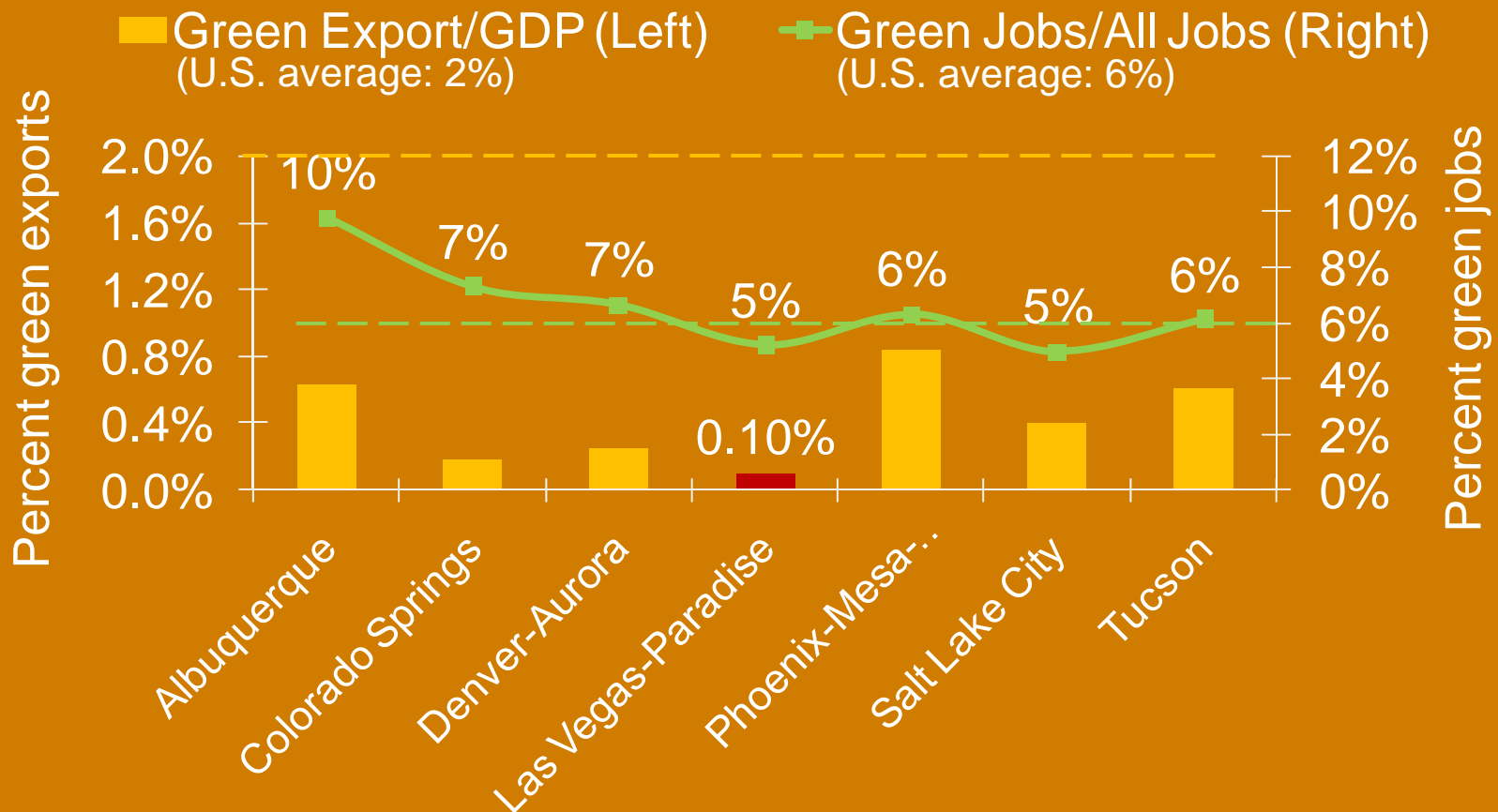
R&D is a critical driver of innovation & productivity, but Las Vegas conducts little of it



Patenting rates remain low



Partly as a result, Las Vegas remains fairly weak in critical green export activities

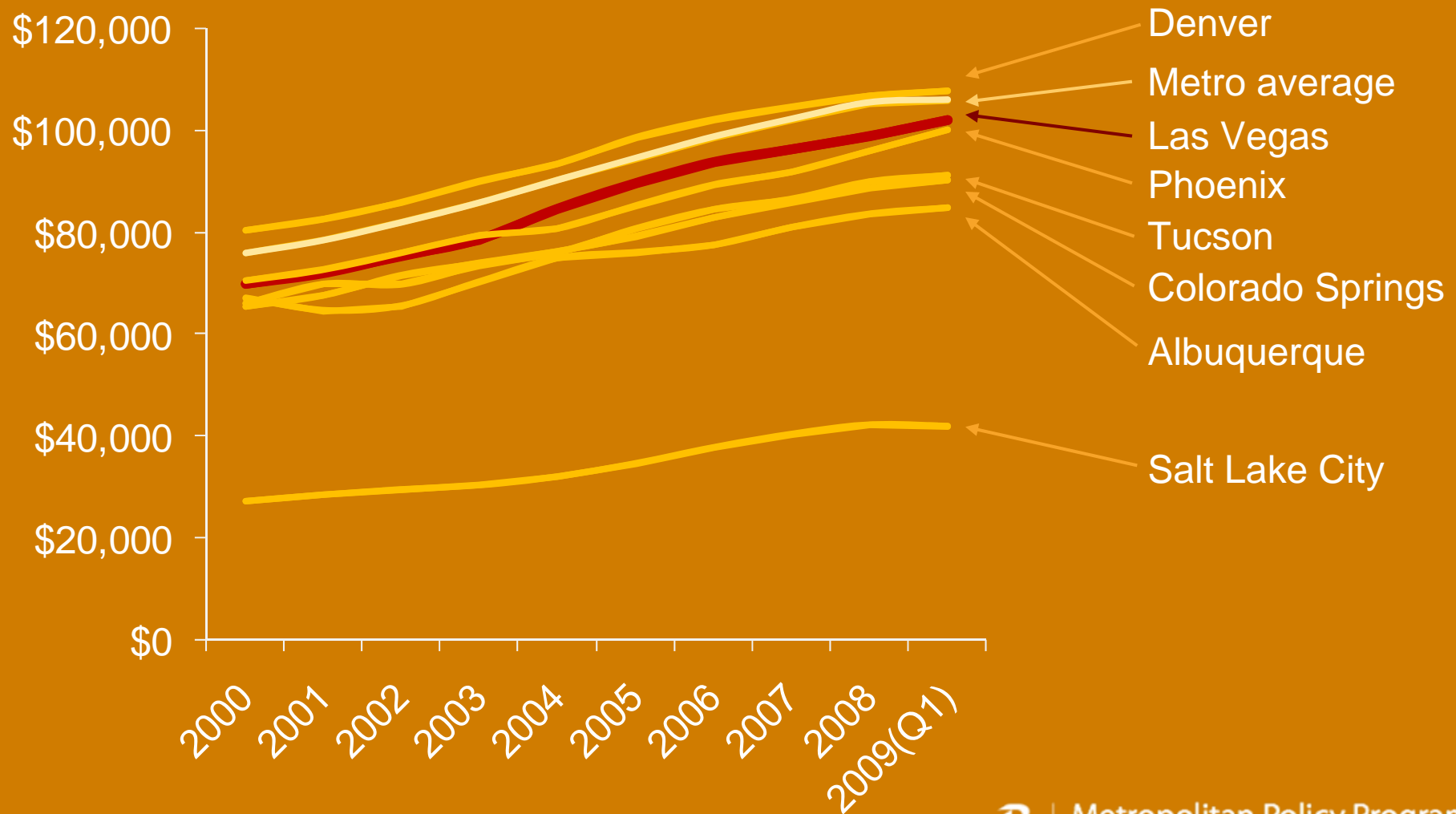


Source: Brookings analysis of 2006 data from County Business Patterns and U.S. Census Foreign Trade Office. "Green" data are from the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth



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And yet, Las Vegas' productivity continues to outstrip most regional competitors



The convening-hospitality-gaming sector remains a world-class source of export income and innovation



And natural assets, focus, and convening power are building new sectors



Challenges

Infrastructure

Innovation

Sustainable, Quality Places



Climate change has heightened water supply questions



And while natural growth constraints have fueled relatively dense development, policy choices have left the region auto-dependent and poorly linked



And yet, a strong, dense job core represents an important starting point



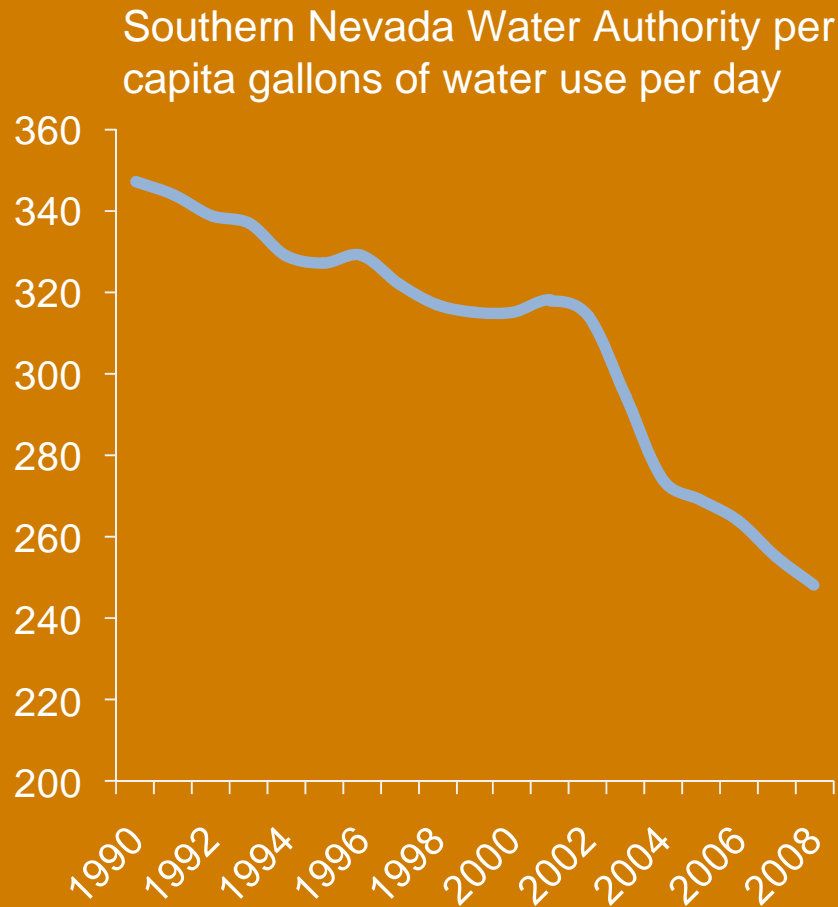
Ninety percent of Las Vegas area jobs are located within 10 miles of the city center



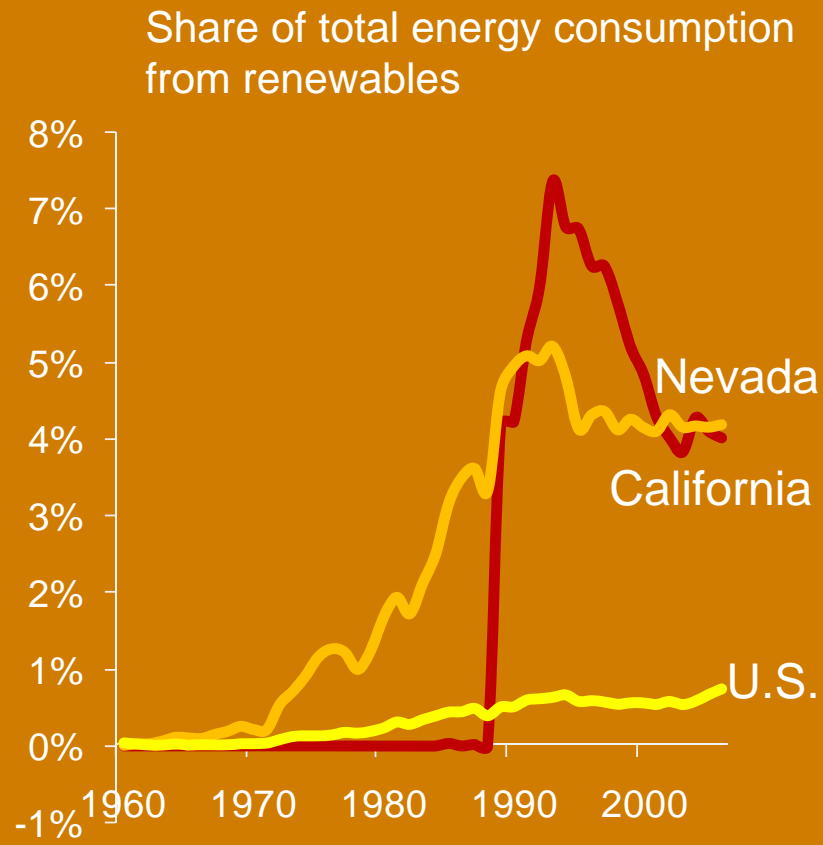
Radical new urban design is beginning to retrofit the autoscape



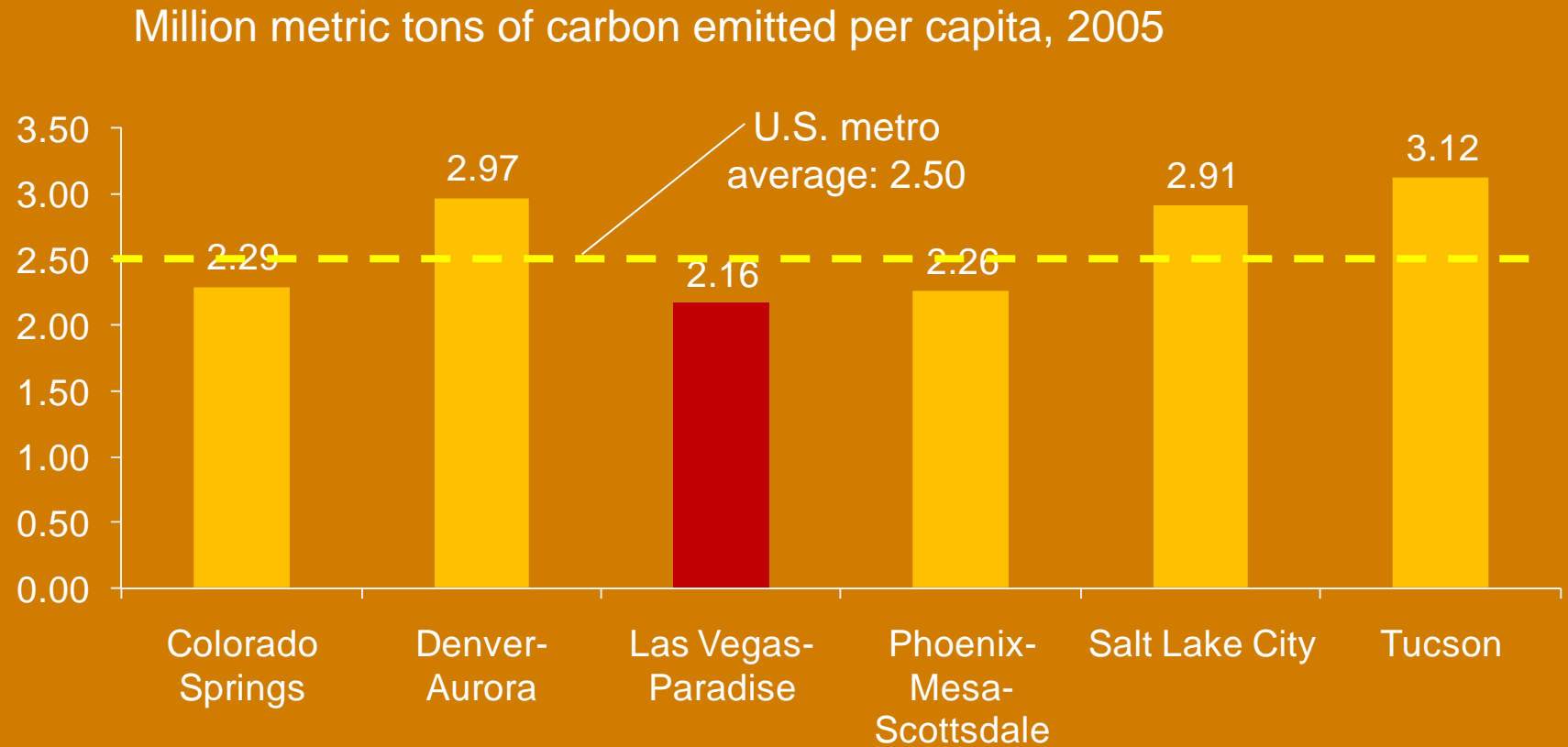
Huge strides are being made on other aspects of sustainability, such as water



And the region has shifted faster, and farther, toward renewables than anywhere



Partly as a result, Las Vegas' carbon footprint remains below the national and regional average



In short, Las Vegas faces the future with significant promise...if it uses its time well



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And now, a vision...



The time has come for America's newest metropolitan colossus to leverage the new drivers of prosperity and claim full **global city status**



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www.brookings.edu/metro/intermountain_west.aspx



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