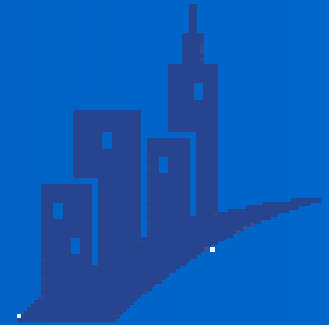


The Brookings Institution

Metropolitan Policy Program
Robert Puentes, Fellow



Of First Burbs and Boom Burbs: Dealing with Suburban Transition in the 21st Century

City of Plano, TX
Annual Retreat
October 10, 2006



Of First Burbs and Boom Burbs: Dealing with Suburban Transition in the 21st Century

I

What is the national context for the discussion about transitioning suburbs?

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To what extent does Plano reflect these trends?

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How are some suburbs organizing?

Profound demographic, economic, social, and cultural forces are reshaping the nation.



Demographically, the country is growing, aging, and diversifying.

Economically, the nation is being transformed by globalization, deindustrialization, and technological innovation.

Culturally, the nation is changing its attitude towards cities and urban living.

These forces present the nation with a complex and, at times, conflicting set challenges.

The environment for U.S. cities today is generally positive.

Demographic changes give cities a chance to compete for new residents.

At the same time - decentralization is still the prevailing trend in metropolitan America.

Pressures of fast growth on the suburban fringe still dominate.



But simply focusing on city resurgence and the sprawling suburban fringe is not sufficient for a broad discussion of metropolitan growth.



Old demarcation lines that historically stratified metropolitan areas are long gone.

No longer is America divided into cities, suburbs, and rural areas.

Further, the term “suburbs” is now not sufficient to describe the range of experiences in these places.

Frequently, suburban places in the middle are caught in a policy blindspot.

Attention is frequently focused on center cities, for long-established reasons, and on newer suburbs for current concerns about fast growth.

First suburbs are sometimes too small or not distressed enough to qualify for assistance.

Little in federal or state policy is focused on the maintenance and rehabilitation needs of first suburbs.



What is Plano?



“Emerging Edge City”

Garreau, Edge City, 1991

“Suburban ideal”

Colloff, *Texas Monthly*, 1999

“Nerdistan”

Kotkin and DeVol, 2001

“Boomburb”

Lang and Simmons, 2003

“First Ring Suburb”

Greater Dallas Planning Council, 2004

“Former exurban boomtown”

Lyman, *New York Times*, 2005

“Inner-tier Community”

Vision North Texas, 2006

“Emerging First Tier Suburb”

Plano Retreat, 2006

“Cosmoburb”

Lang and LeFurgy, 2007



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First suburbs can be thought of as older communities in the inner-ring outside central cities.



Hudson County, NJ



King County, WA



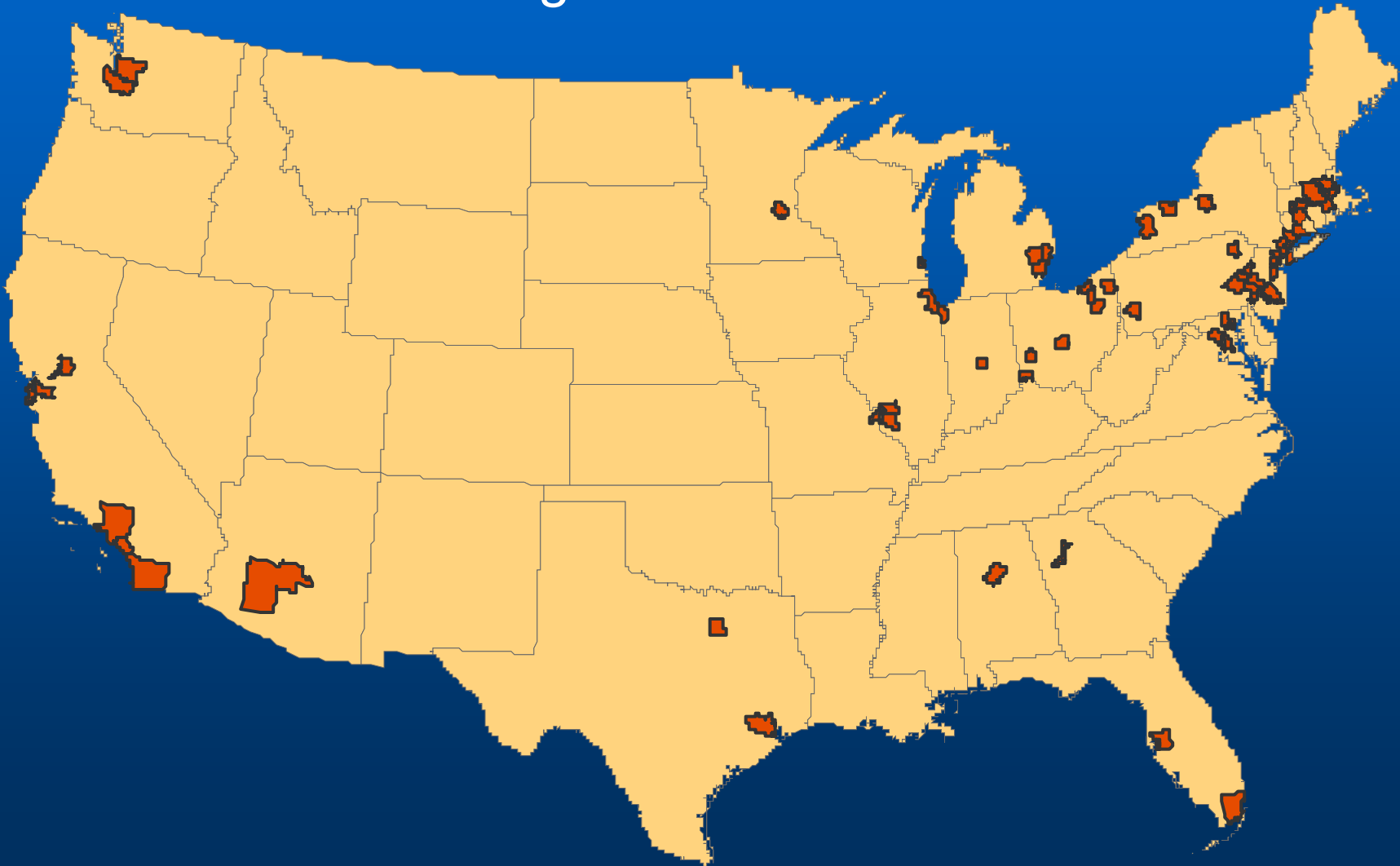
Dallas County, TX

Situated in close proximity to center cities.

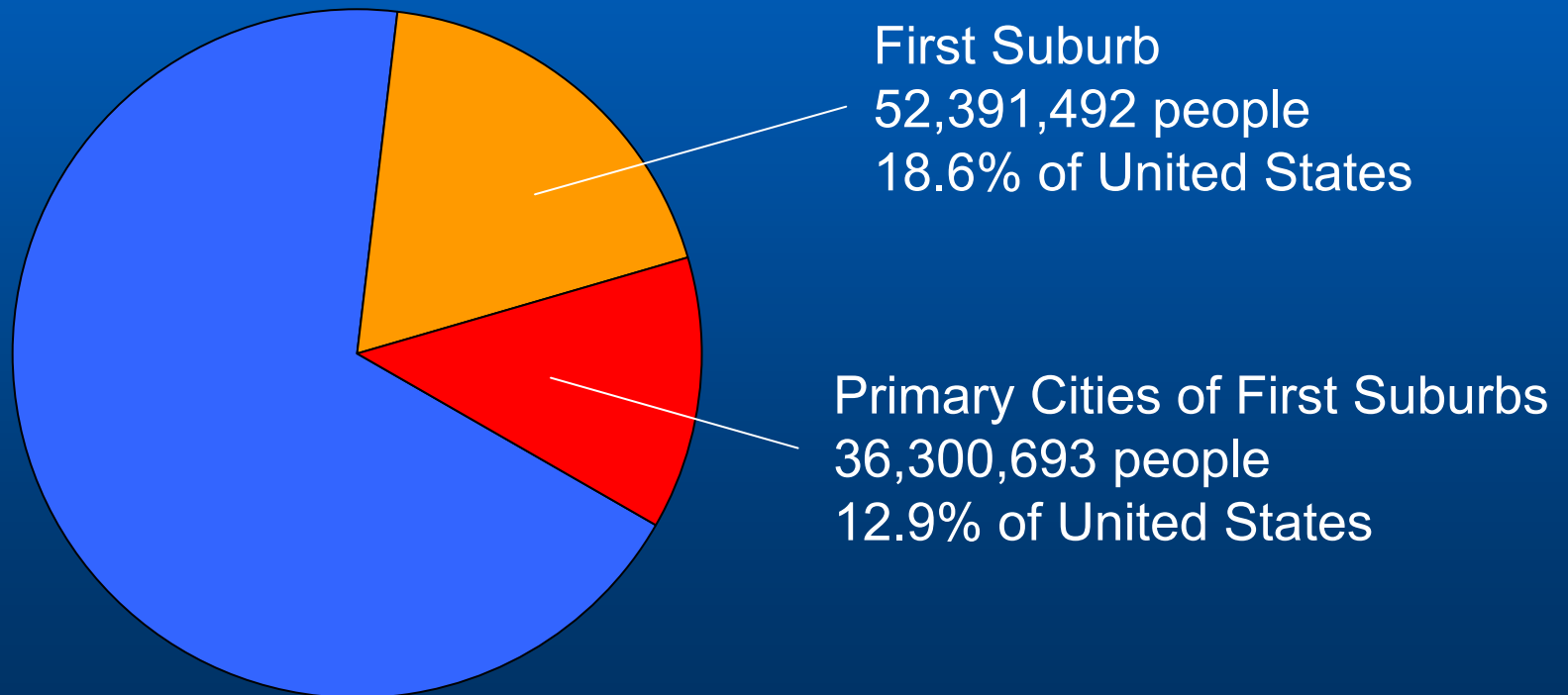
Developed mainly before the era of rapid suburbanization.

Also known as close-in suburbs, older suburbs, first-tier communities, trolley car suburbs, industrial boroughs, mature suburbs, and working class suburbs.

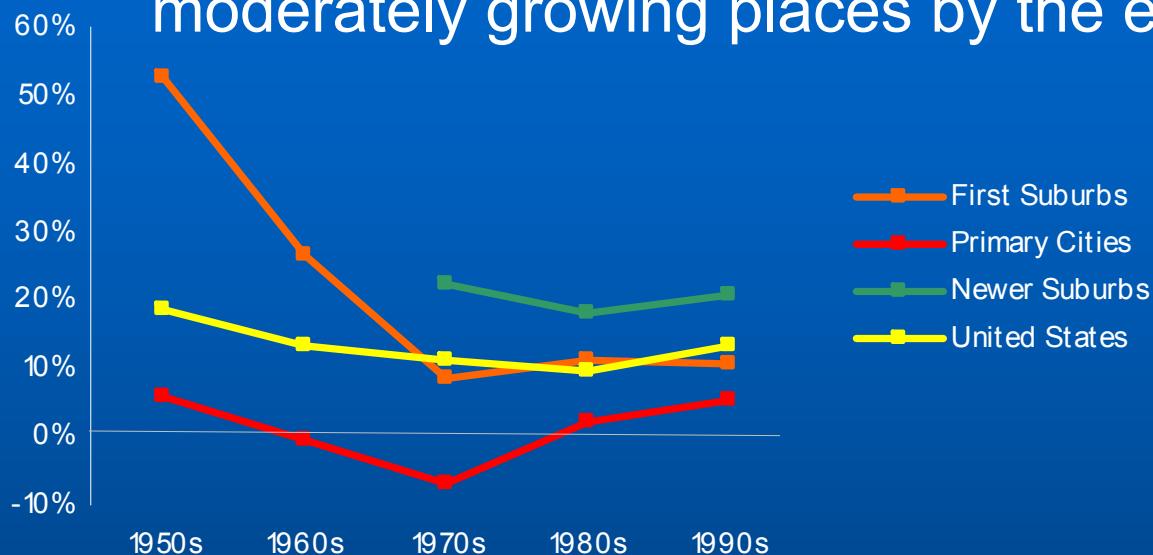
There are 64 first suburban counties found throughout the nation



About one-fifth of the nation's population – 19 percent – lives in first suburbs.

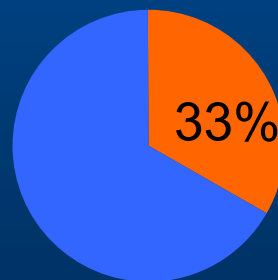


First suburbs have evolved from being fast growing to moderately growing places by the end of the century.



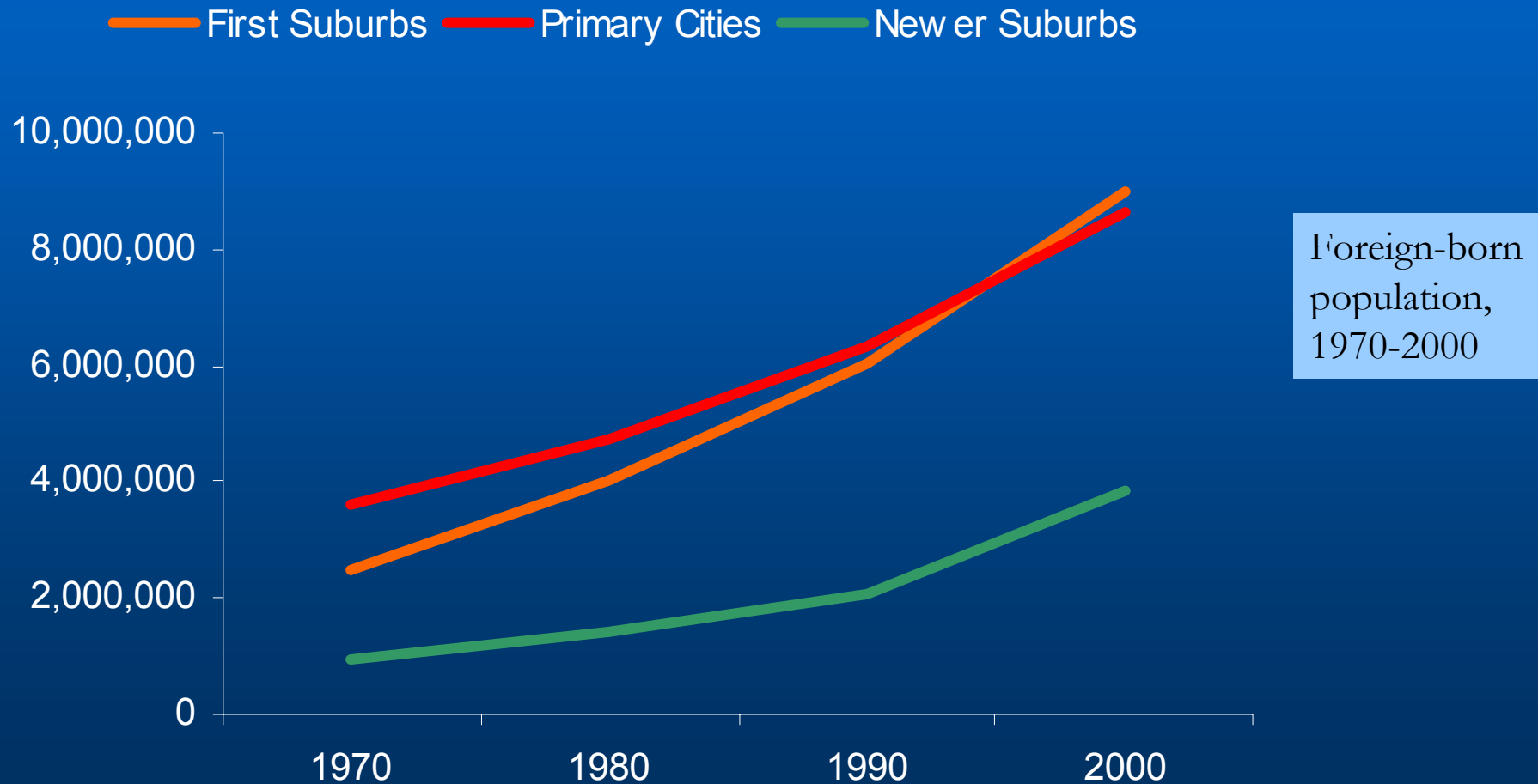
Population growth rates, 1950-2000

And first suburbs went from being less diverse than the nation in 1980 to being more diverse by 2000.



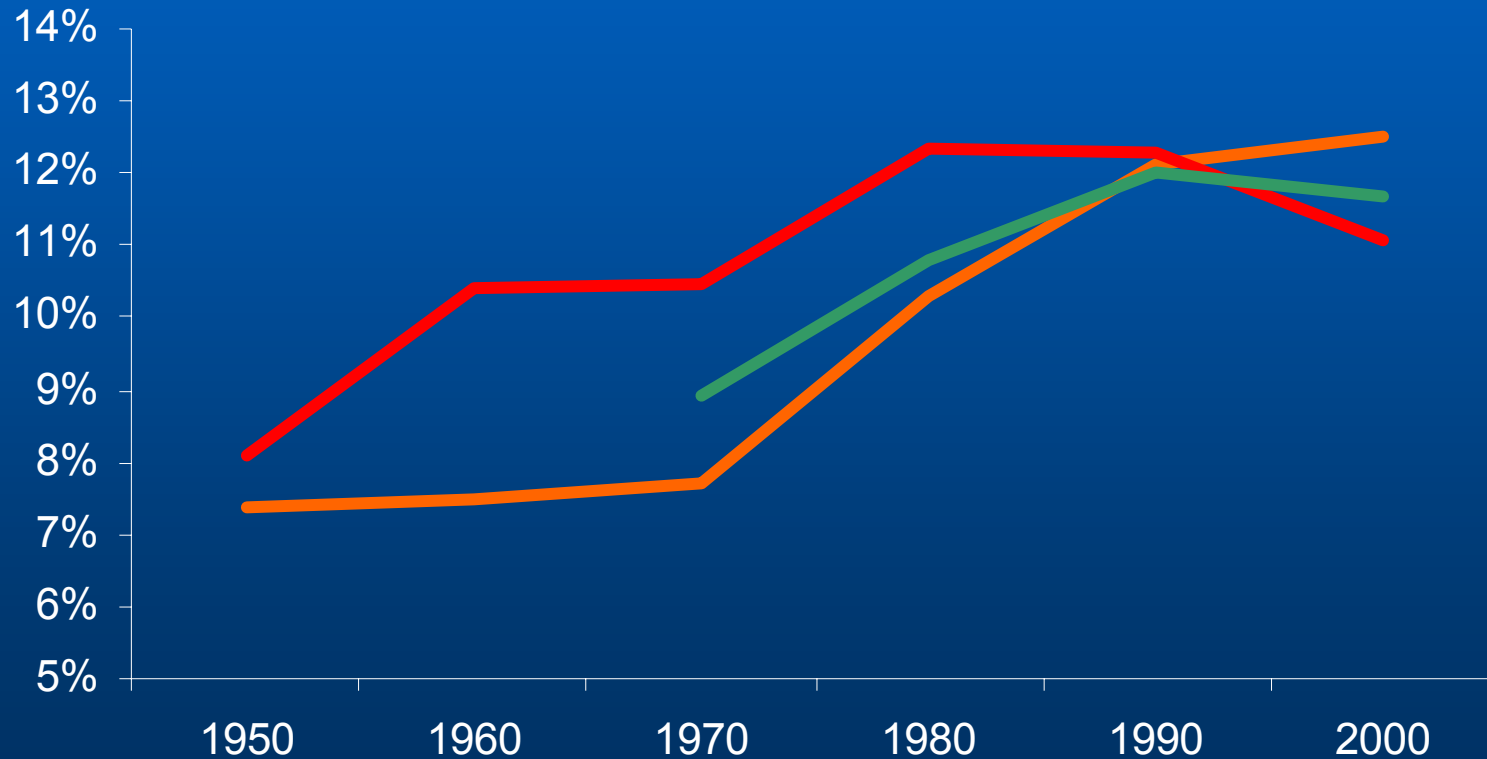
Percent of first suburban population other than non-Hispanic white, 2000

First suburbs are now home to a large and growing number of foreign-born residents.



The percent of elderly in first suburbs is increasing very fast and is now higher than primary cities and newer suburbs.

— First Suburbs — Primary Cities — New er Suburbs



Percent of the population age 65 and over, 1950-2000

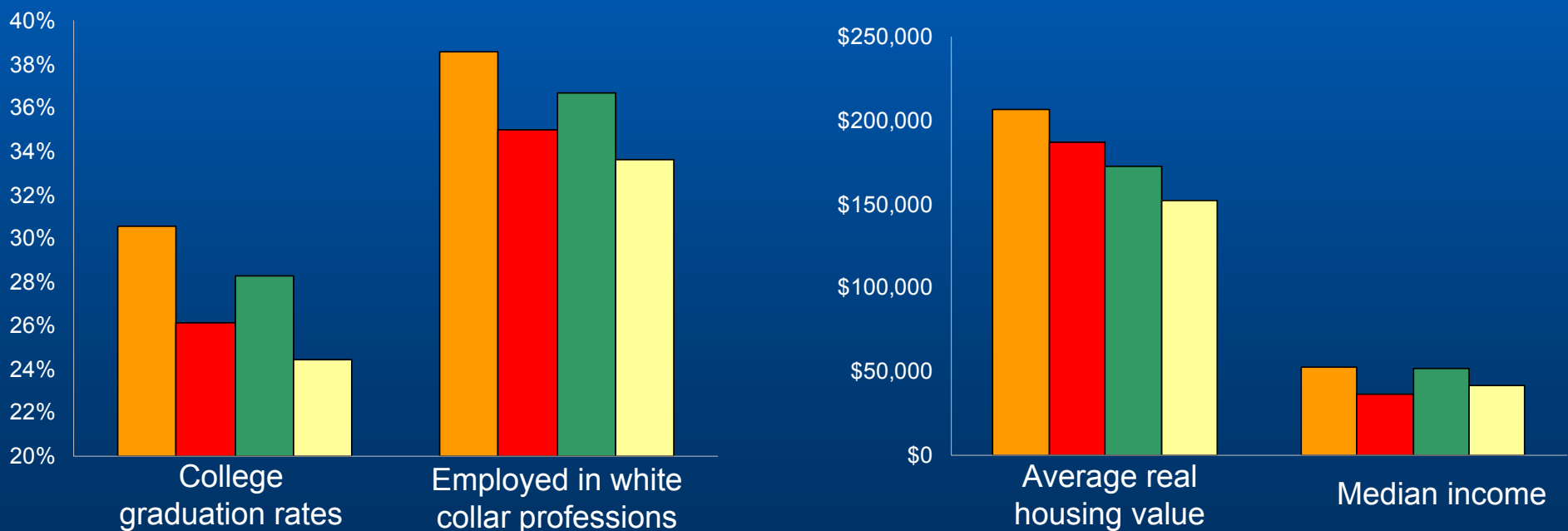
Since 1970, the total number of children barely grew – yet households are still large in first suburbs.

- However, the population of children under 15 is growing very slowly. There are only 190,000 more children in first suburbs than there were 30 years ago.
- Many first suburbs still have a much higher percentage of their households that are married-with-children than the national average.
- Yet the largest increase in household type was female-headed households with children. And the number of so-called “non-families” is greater than any household type.



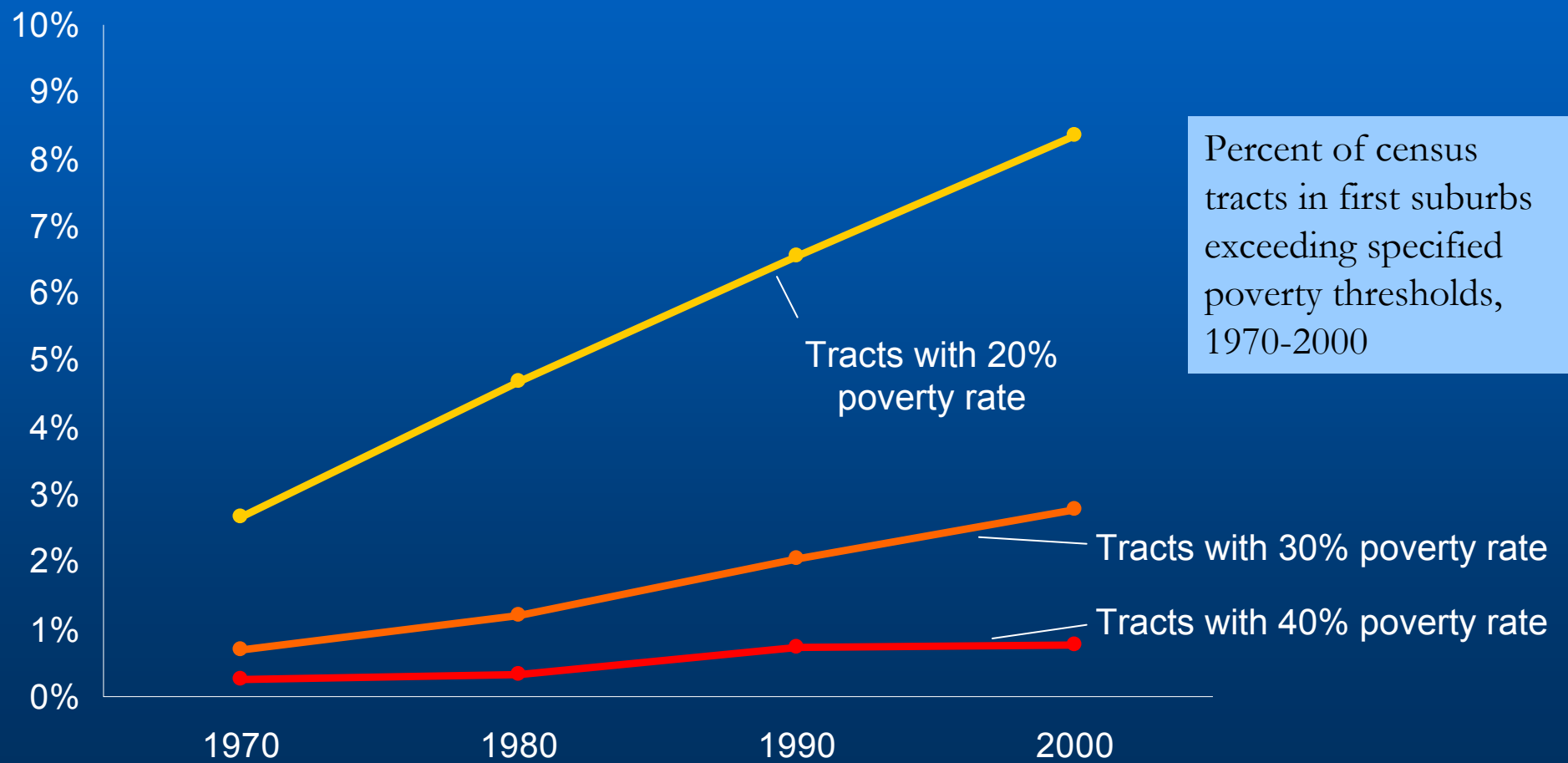
First suburbs have largely retained their position as home to some of the most highly educated and wealthy residents, those with white collar jobs, and highest housing values.

■ First Suburbs
 ■ Primary Cities
 ■ Newer Suburbs
 ■ United States



Select statistics, 2000

However, while the number of high poverty neighborhoods is dropping sharply in urban areas throughout the country, it is increasing at an alarming rate in first suburbs.





Among first suburb's many assets is the intangible benefit that accrues to existing places: a sense of community.

Design and quality; centrality and convenience; infrastructure

But it is important to take a number of challenges seriously and recognize their urgency.

Age, fiscal stress, declining real estate, fragmented governance



Boomburbs can be considered large, rapidly growing suburban cities.



Chesapeake, VA



Peoria, AZ



Daly City, CA

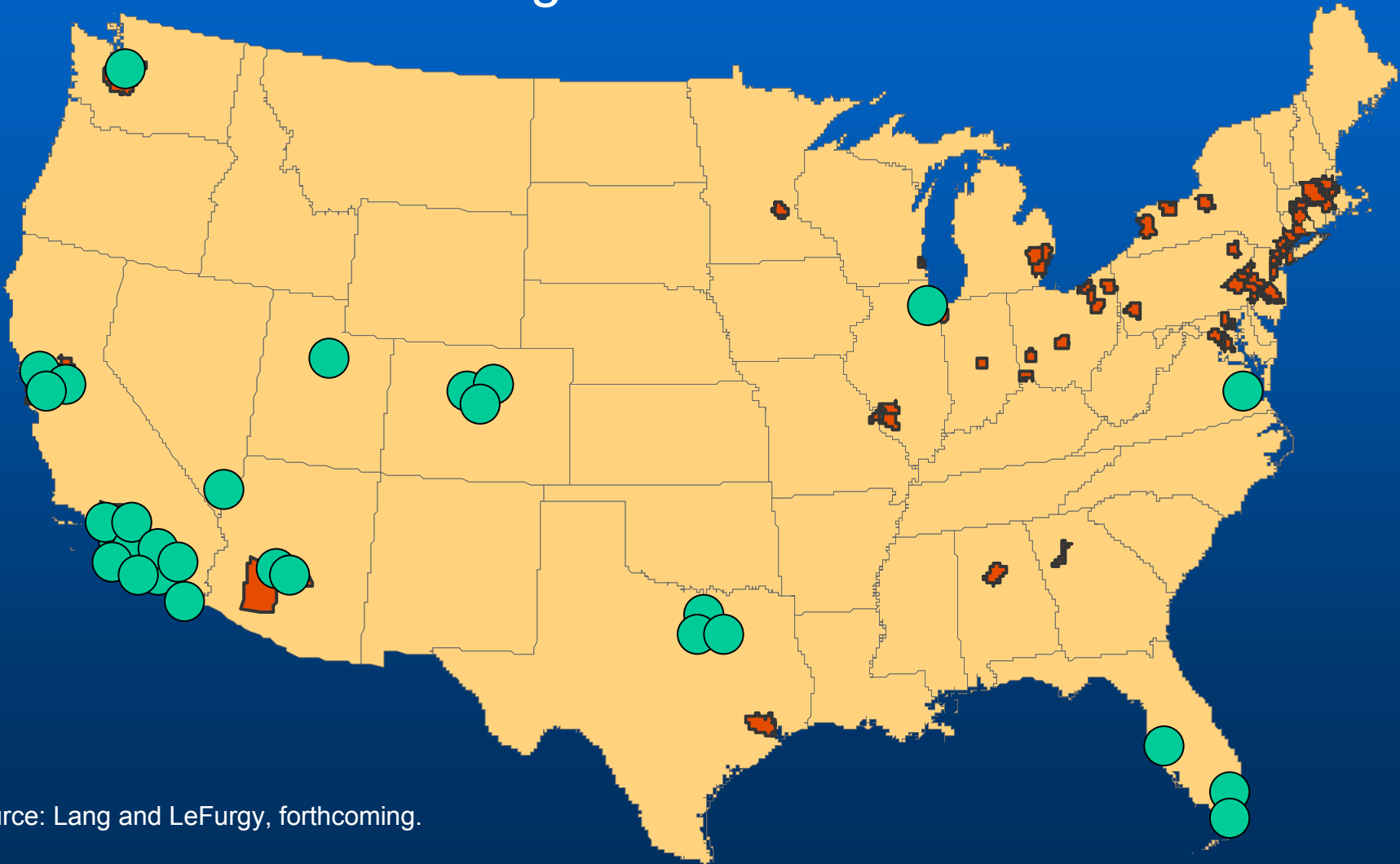
Places with more than 100,000 residents

Not the largest cities in their respective metropolitan areas

Maintained double digit rates of growth for each Census since 1950

Source: Lang and LeFurgy, Boomburbs: The Rise of America's Accidental Cities, forthcoming, Brookings.

There are 54 Boomburbs found throughout the nation.



Source: Lang and LeFurgy, forthcoming.

On average, Boomburbs are very diverse with relatively low rates of poverty, and homeownership; but high household incomes.

	Non-White	Foreign Born	Families in Poverty	BA Rate	Home-owners	Median Income
Boomburbs	32.4%	22.4%	7.9%	26.3%	62.4%	\$51,709
Top 50 US Metros	30.0%	15.7%	8.4%	28.3%	62.6%	\$48,042
US Total	12.5%	11.1%	9.2%	24.4%	66.2%	\$41,994

Boomburbs can also be so large that parts of the city are declining while other sections are literally still developing.

Parts of Chandler, AZ, for instance, are in dire need of redevelopment at the same time developers rush to build on land in the open desert that the city has just recently annexed.





Many, if not most, Boomburbs are approaching their build-out point.

More than half of all Boomburbs will be at buildout point by 2030.

Over one-third have stopped annexing land.

Many have less than 10% of their space left to develop.

Yet few Boomburbs are planning for buildout.

Fortunately, many Boomburbs are inventive, entrepreneurial places.

Several Boomburbs have devised strategies to adapt their small town governments to the realities of big cities.

Often, private solutions relieve the burden on both public finance and management.

Almost half of all Boomburbs have or are planning light rail connections with the requisite increases in density.





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So how does Plano stack up?



During the 1990s, Plano grew the fastest of all medium sized cities, and was second fastest growing of all cities.

Triple digit growth in the 1970s and 1980s has slowed and increased by “*only*” 13 percent since 2000.

Like many first suburbs, Plano is highly educated with wealthy residents, many white collar jobs, and high housing values.

No city has a greater share of its households in the high income bracket.

It is racially diverse, with a large foreign-born population. Yet overall poverty rates in Plano are extremely low.

So how does Plano stack up?



Select Boomburb	Buildout by 2030?	<10% land remains?	Becoming denser?	No plans to annex?	Rail exists/ planned?
PLANO	✓	✓ +/-	✓	✓	✓
Scottsdale, AZ	✓				
Santa Ana, CA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Henderson, NV			✓		
Garland, TX					✓

Maybe we need a new term?

“First Boomer”

“Older Boomer”

“Aging Boomer”

“Mature Boomer”



*UBERS: “Urbanizing Burbs
Experiencing Relative
Slowdowns”*

*TOASTERS: “Transitioning Older AreaS That Endeavour
to Reign-in Sprawl ”*

*NOSE TUBBS: “New Older Suburban Enclaves That
Used to Be BoomerS”*



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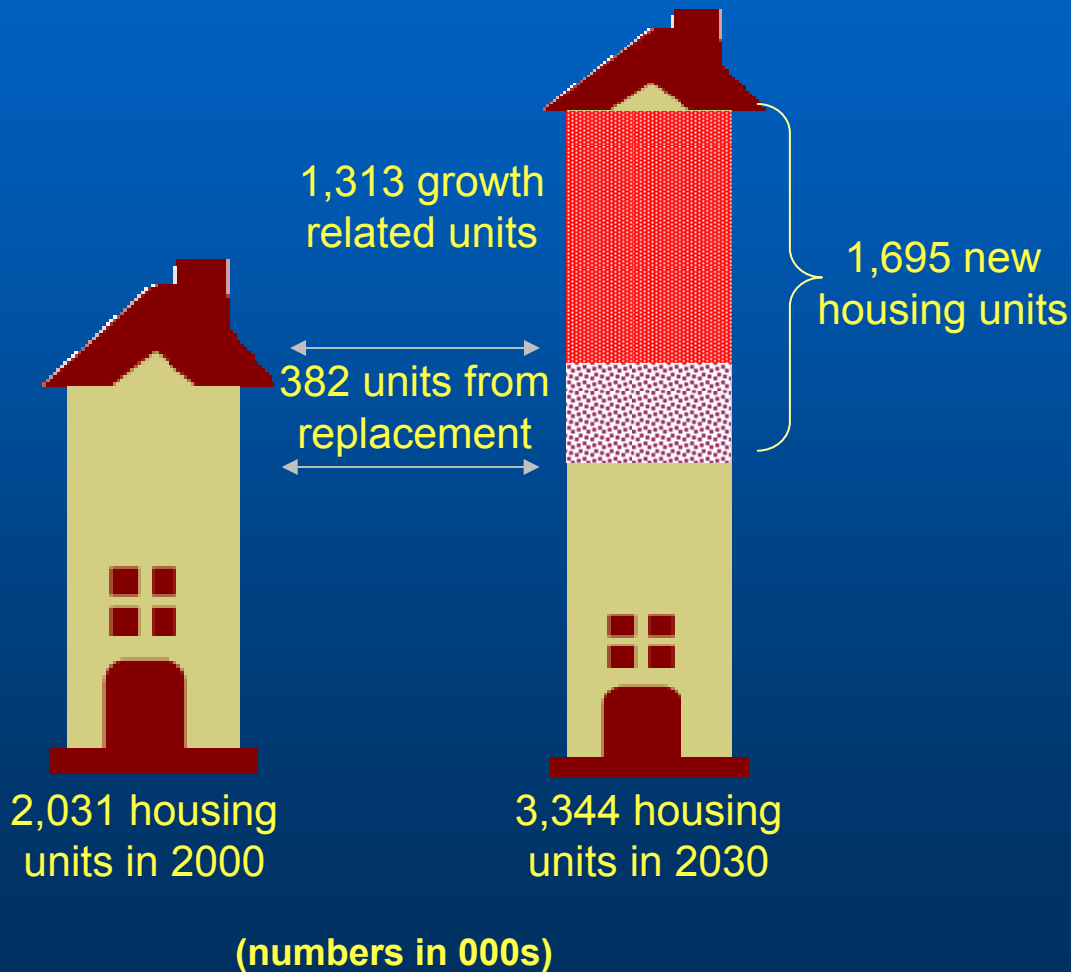
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Many Western and Sunbelt metropolitan areas, like Dallas, are expected to continue to grow considerably



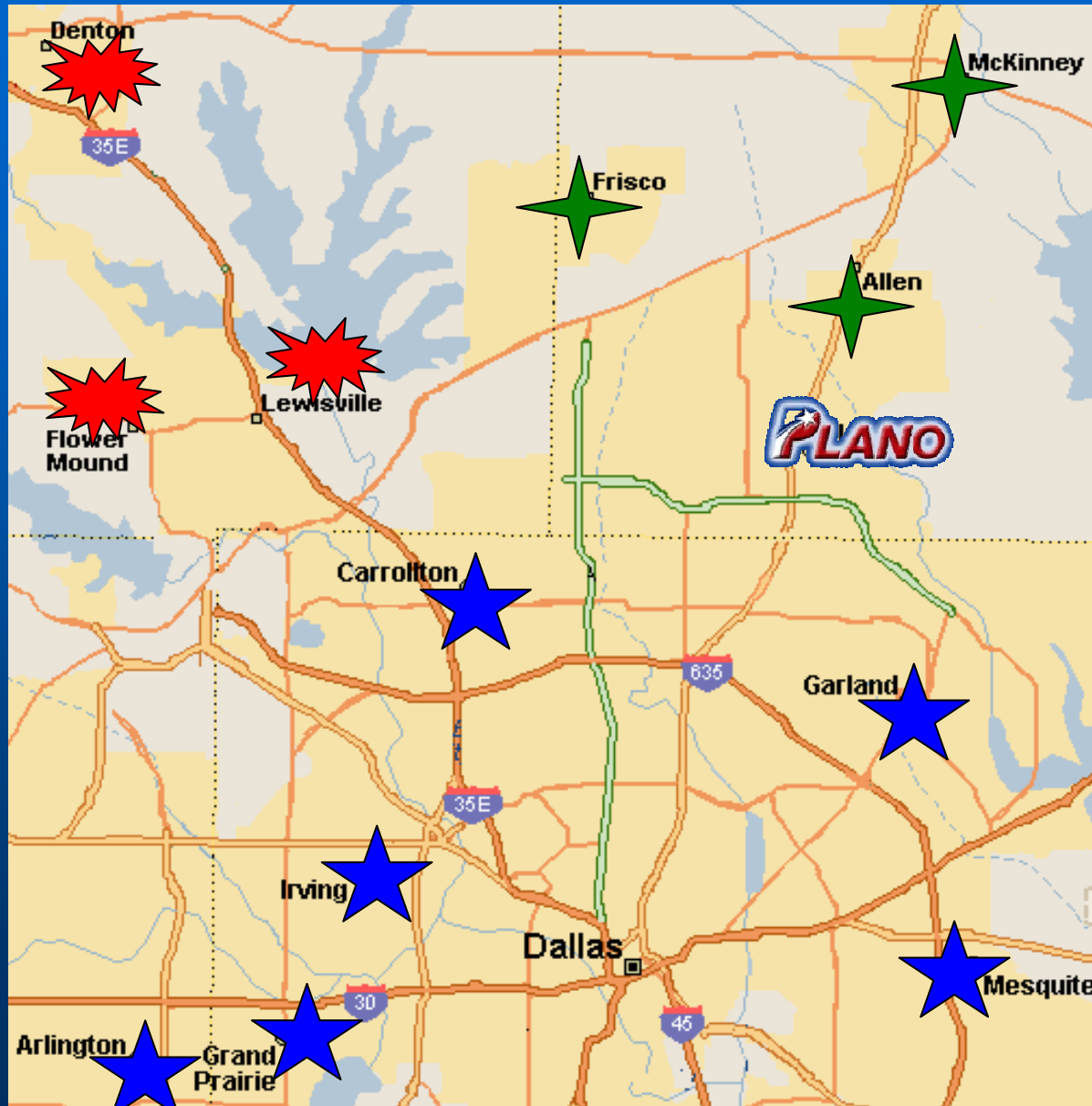
The Metroplex will need to build 86% and 112% of the current residential and commercial space, respectively, to accommodate new growth

The Dallas metropolitan area is already heavily “exurban”

Metropolitan area

	DALLAS	Minneapolis	Washington	Houston	Chicago
Exurban population	444,517	370,412	356,809	333,078	317,858
Exurban counties	10	10	11	5	7

No place has more residents living in exurban areas than metropolitan Dallas.



Plano has company. And competition

★ There are six other Boomburbs

★ Three “baby” Boomburbs

★ And three major exurbs

Mature suburbs in transition need to plan for change and rethink their attitudes toward several key issues:

DENSITY

Compact development enhances economic performance, is more fiscally responsible, and can expand housing choice.

URBANITY

Today's demographic and market changes favor more housing choices and quality, urban development.

DIVERSITY

Cities with and openness to diversity of all sorts enjoy higher rates of innovation and high-wage economic growth.



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Advancing a suburban policy agenda will require new political coalitions and working alliances

Politically, many suburban areas hold many local governments, often with their own land use, zoning, taxation powers.

A high level of competition makes it difficult to respond to challenges or to advocate for reforms in the state capitol.

Although represented on boards, leagues, and commissions, suburbs need a special focus on their unique issues and challenges.



There are several examples of statewide and metropolitan coalitions



And there are informal coalitions, metropolitan conveners, researchers, and countywide visions to assist first suburbs



Generally, there is a similar set of core issues around which first suburban coalitions are engaged:

Redevelopment



Transportation



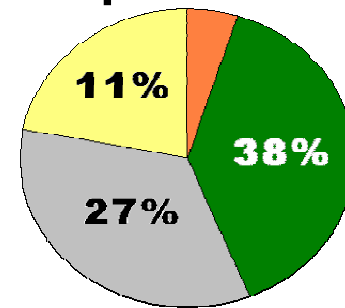
Outreach



Fair share housing



Municipal revenues





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