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project

URBAN CONNECTIVITY AND TRANSFORMATIVE PLACEMAKING

Hanna Love | Fellow | Bass Center for Transformative Placemaking

SUMMER
2024



URBAN CONNECTIVITY AND TRANSFORMATIVE PLACEMAKING:

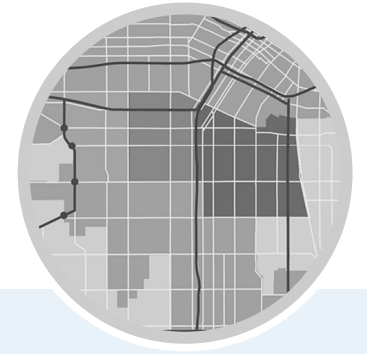
A framework for co-creating inclusive,
vibrant, and connected communities

Hanna Love
Fellow, Brookings Institution

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Why invest in transformative placemaking?



- 📍 New **technologies, demographic, and economic trends** are altering demands for place.
- 📍 These trends have yielded positive impacts but are **failing to benefit too many people and places.**
- 📍 Communities need to invest in **transformative, place-based solutions.**

Multiple forces have shaped the American landscape

Concentration



Dispersion



Segregation



Source: Brookings, "Metro areas are still racially segregated," Jennifer Schaller, 4/017

The digital revolution is impacting growth and development

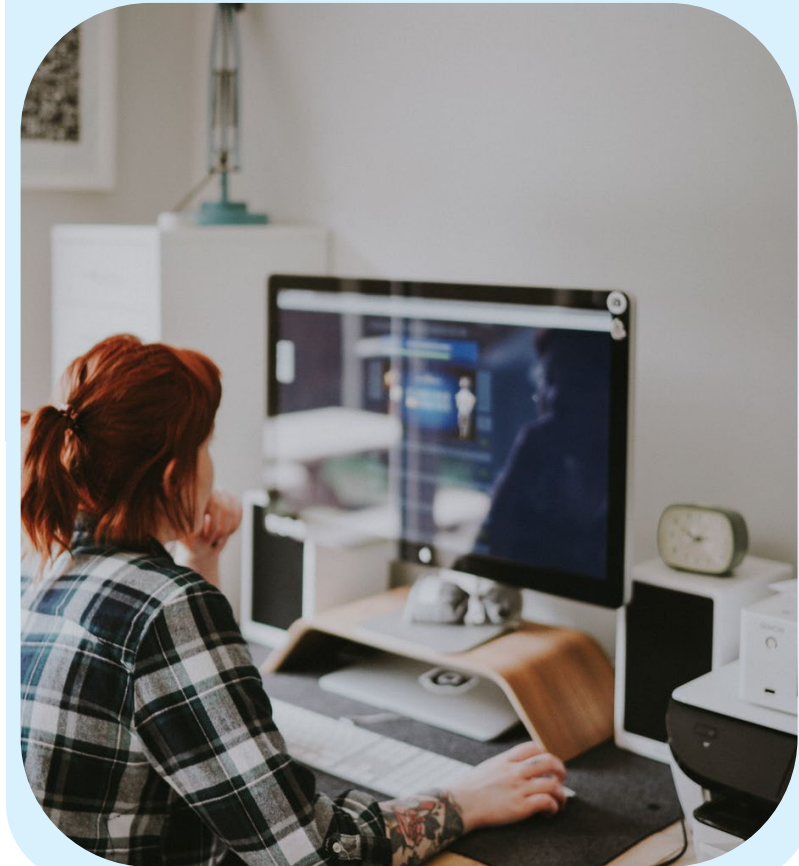
Collaborative



Online



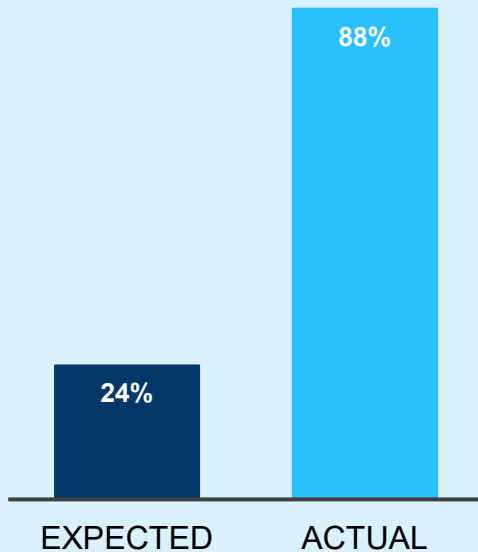
Flexible



The digital revolution is impacting growth and development

Collaborative

Expected vs. actual change in job density around jobs in information sector, 2004-2018



Source: Brookings analysis of Census LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

Online



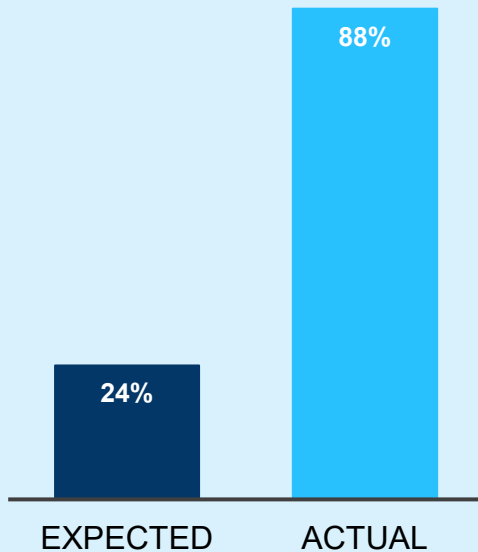
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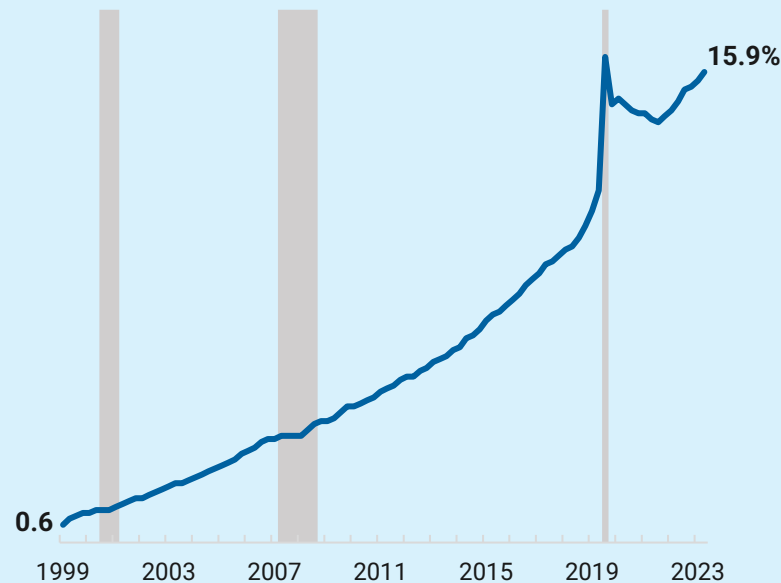
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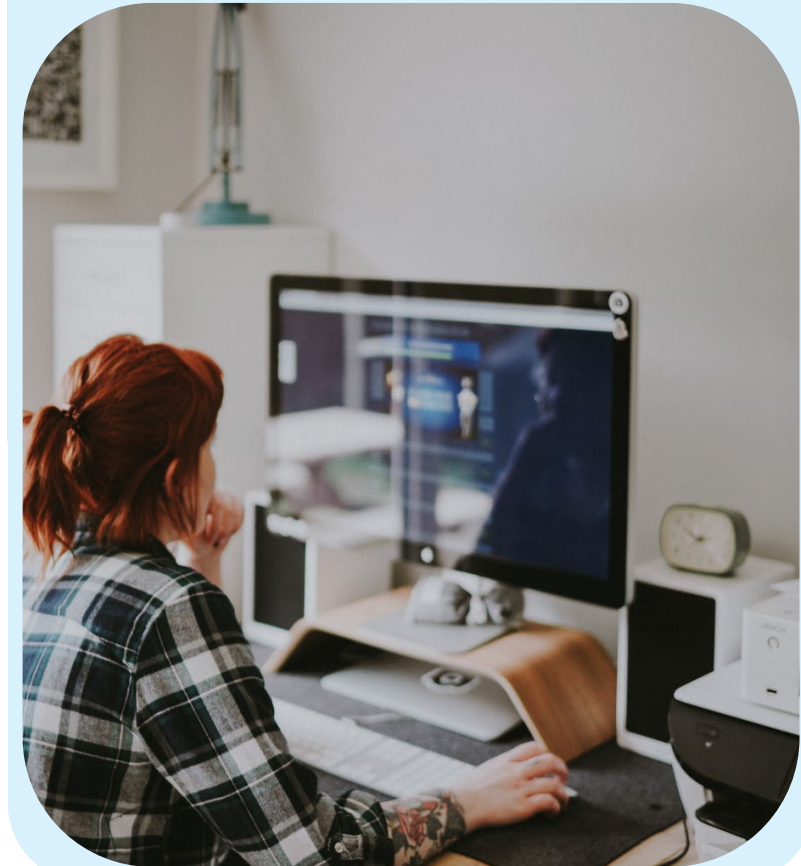
Online

E-commerce retail sales as a percent of total sales, 1999-2024



Source: Brookings analysis of U.S. BLS Data via FRED

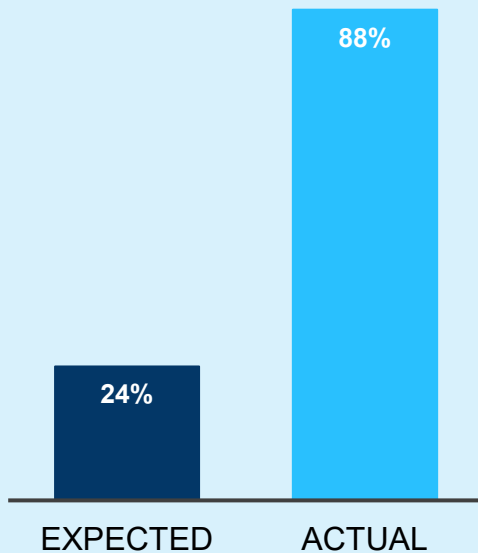
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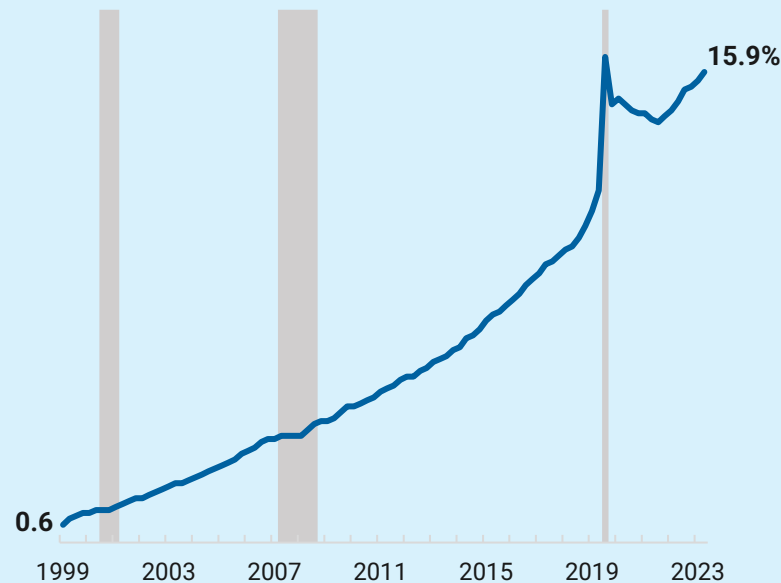
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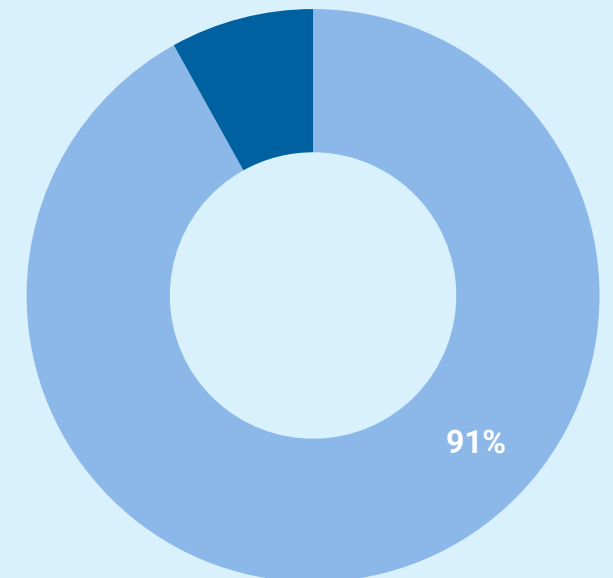
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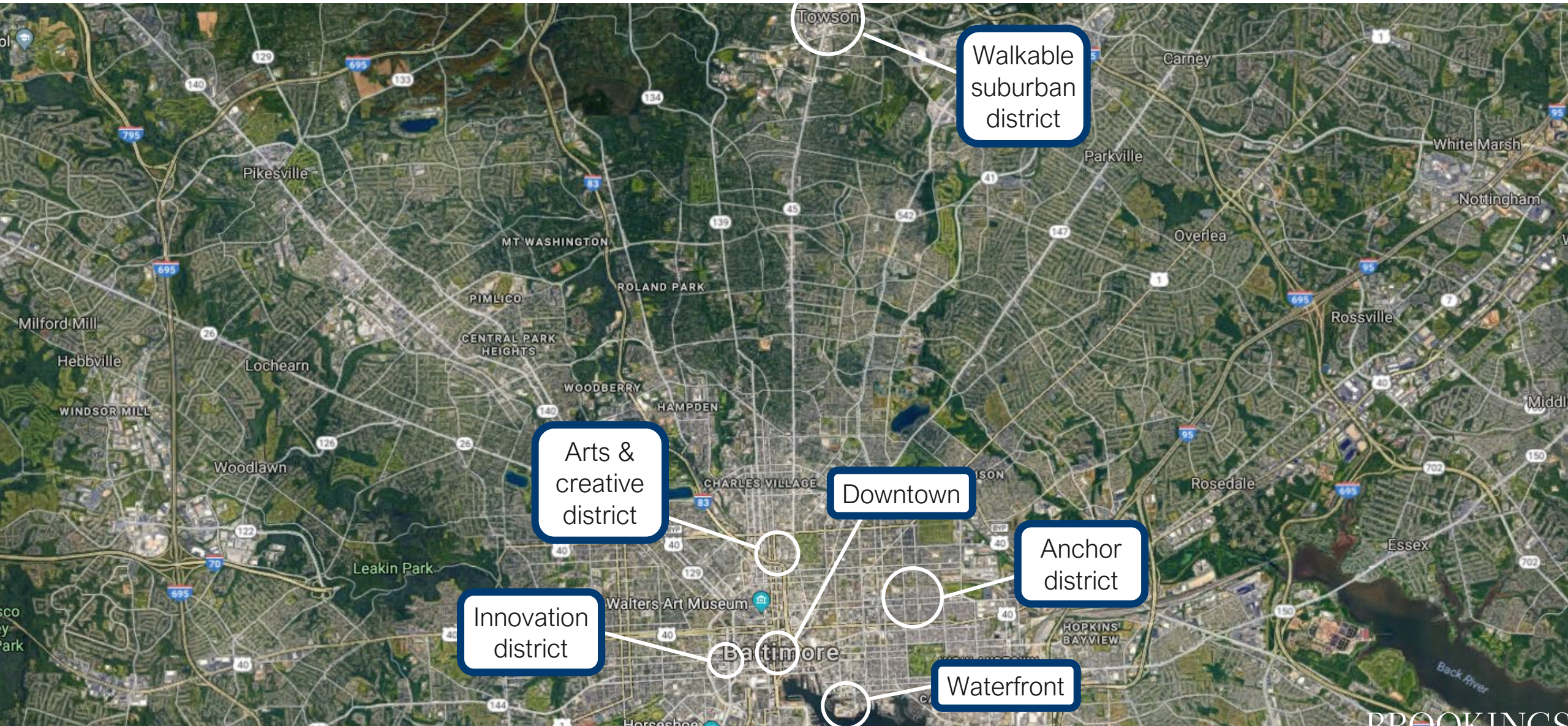
Flexible

Share of professionals who would prefer to work remotely some or all of the time, 2023



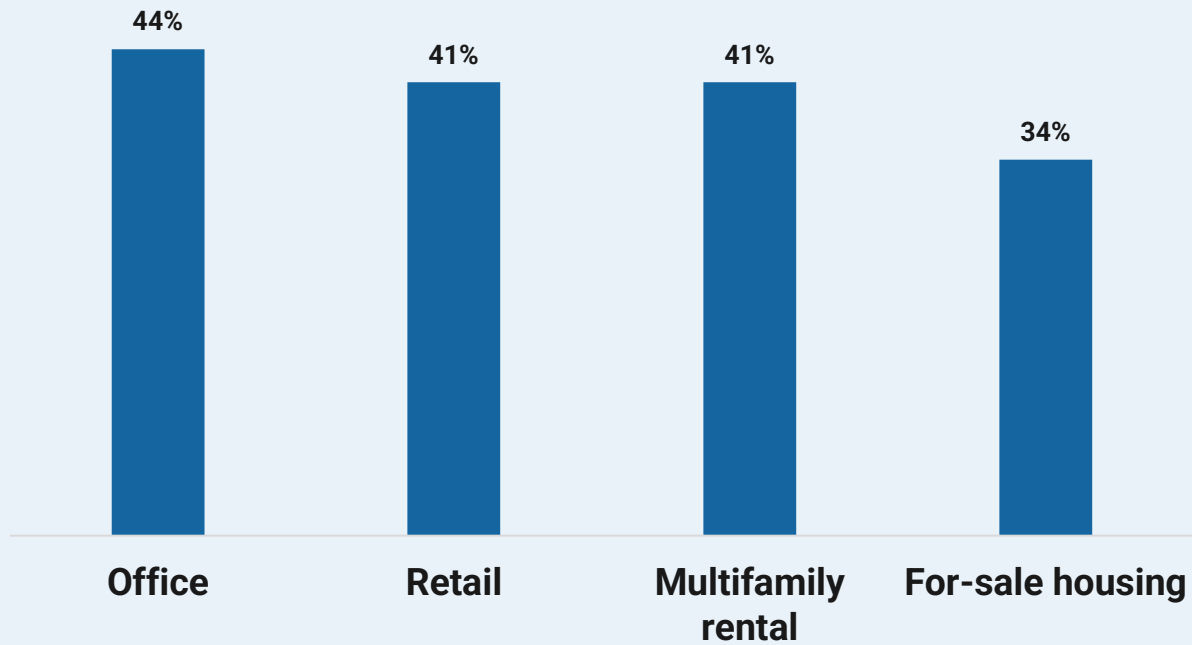
Source: Pew Research Center, "American Trends Survey of U.S. Workers"

These trends are yielding positive impacts for many people and places...



Walkability = Rent premiums (and social, health, environmental benefits)

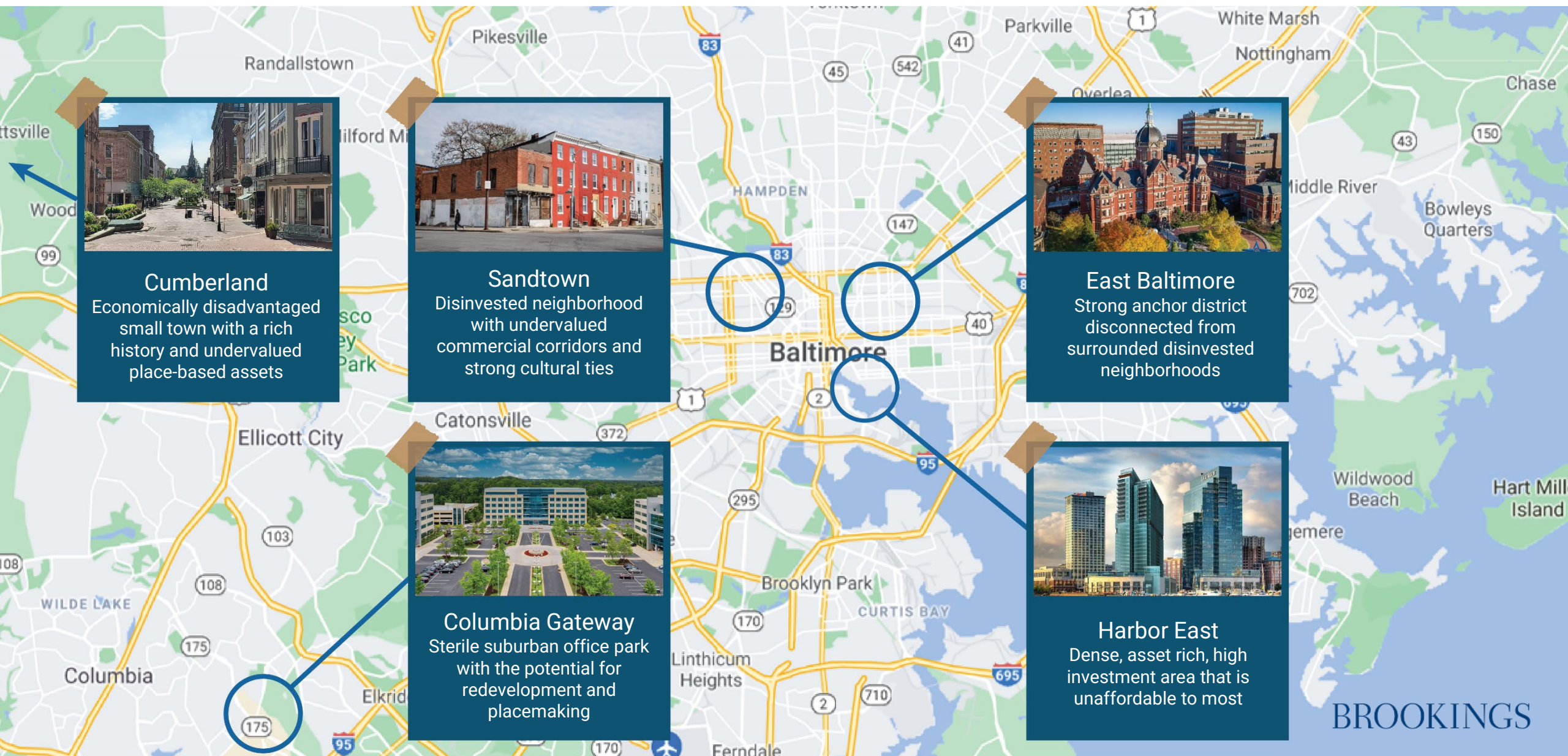
Price premiums for walkable urbanism
vs. drivable sub-urban, 2021



Source: Smart Growth America, "Foot Traffic Ahead," 2023

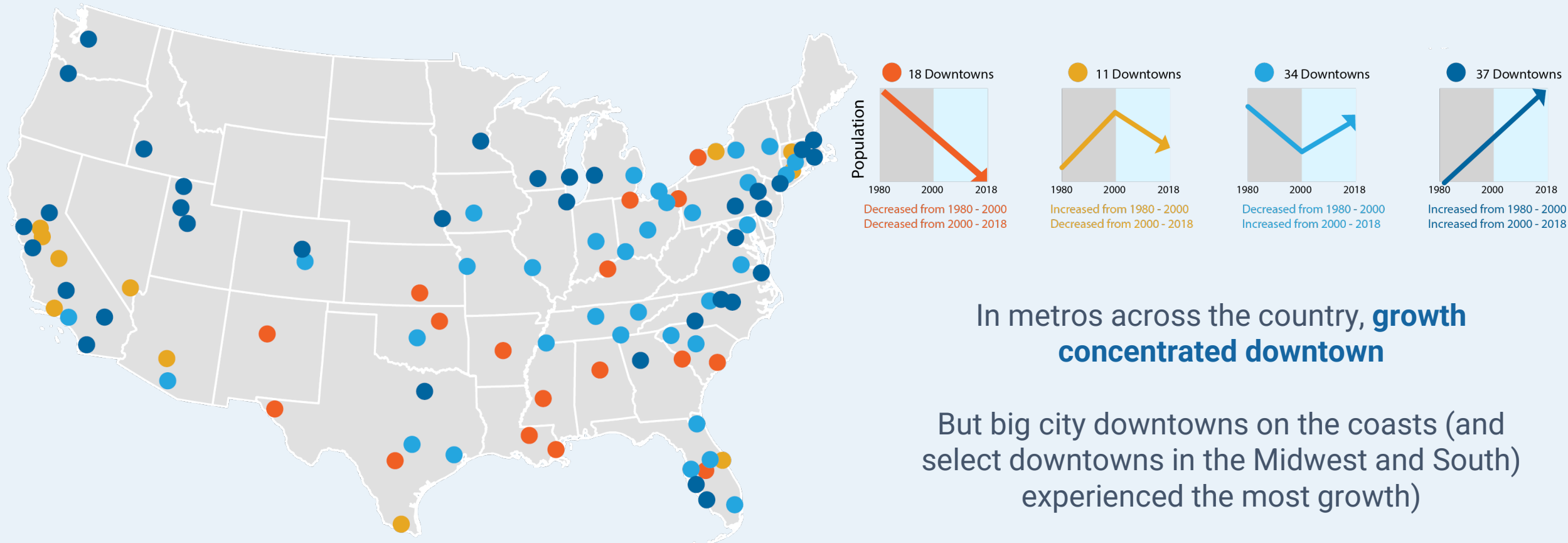


But too many people and places are also being left behind



The knowledge economy has (mostly) rewarded large places

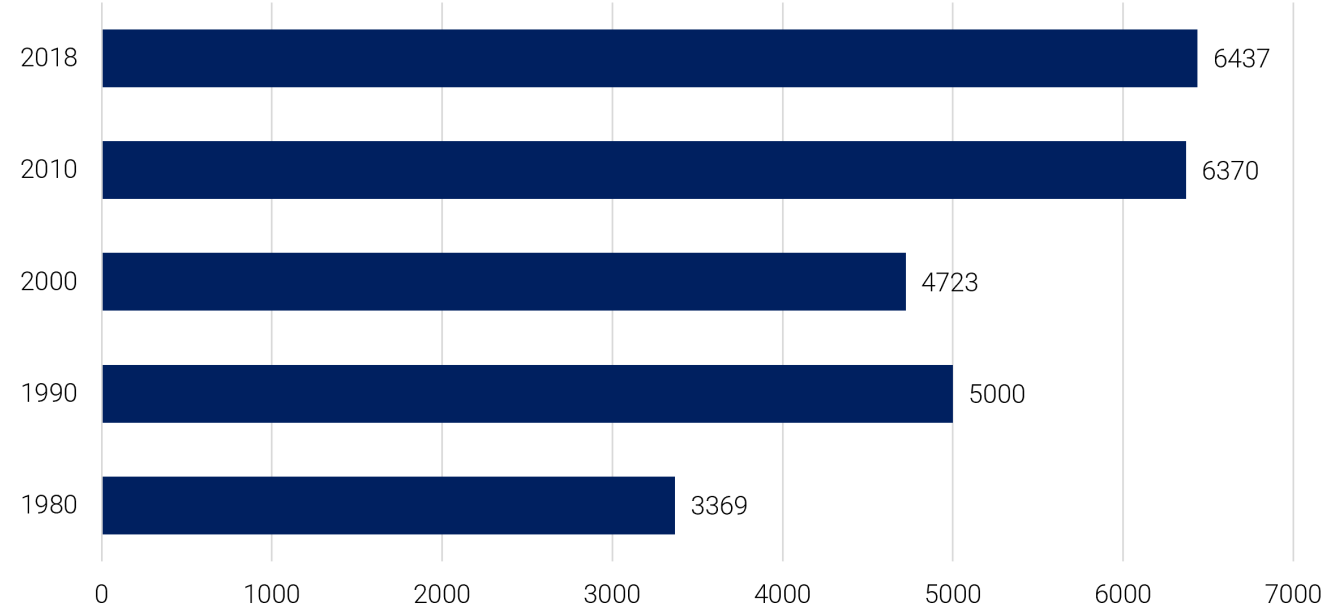
Downtown population growth, 1980 to 2018, 100 metropolitan areas



Within regions, concentrated disadvantage has grown steadily

Number of high-poverty neighborhoods

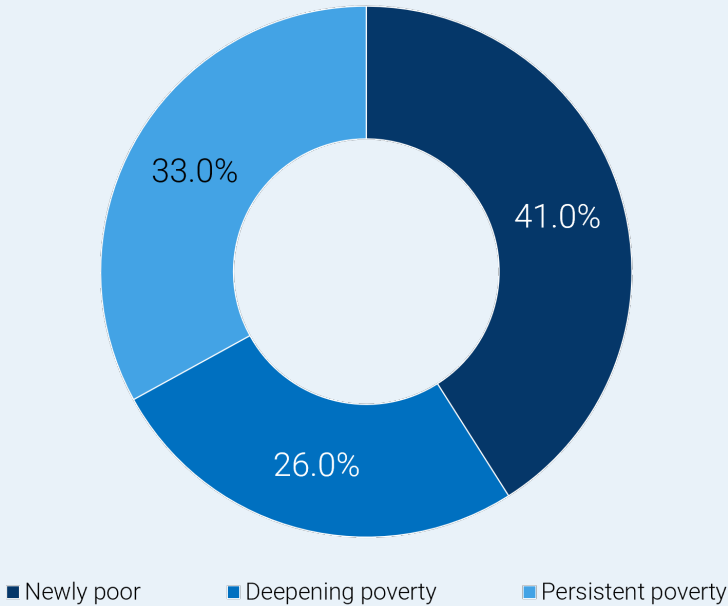
1980-2018, U.S. metro areas



Source: Economic Innovation Group Analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data and American Community Survey 5-Year estimates

Status of high-poverty neighborhoods 2018 relative to where they were in 1980

Newly poor rate <20% in 1980, >=30% in 2018
Deepening poverty rate >=20% and <30% in 1980, >=30% in 2018
Persistent poverty rate >=30% in 1980, >=30% in 2018



Source: Economic Innovation Group analysis of U.S. Census data and American Community Survey 5-Year estimates

Disadvantage disproportionately concentrates in communities of color

Demographic characteristics for high-need and other Census tracts, 2022

	Low Income Community (LIC) tracts	Tracts with no high-need designation
% White	63.5% (+10.4%)	80.3% (-6.4%)
% Black	22.1% (+7.7%)	9.6% (-4.8%)
% Hispanic/Latino	28.8% (-9.3%)	13.6% (+5.9%)

Difference from national average shown in parentheses.

Source: Brookings analysis of U.S. Census Bureau 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Advantage disproportionately concentrates in **white communities** , while disadvantage concentrates in **communities of color**

Our current systems are often too siloed to solve these challenges

Economic development

often lacks a focus on place, placemaking, and (far too often) racial equity.

Community development

often lacks a focus on economic development.



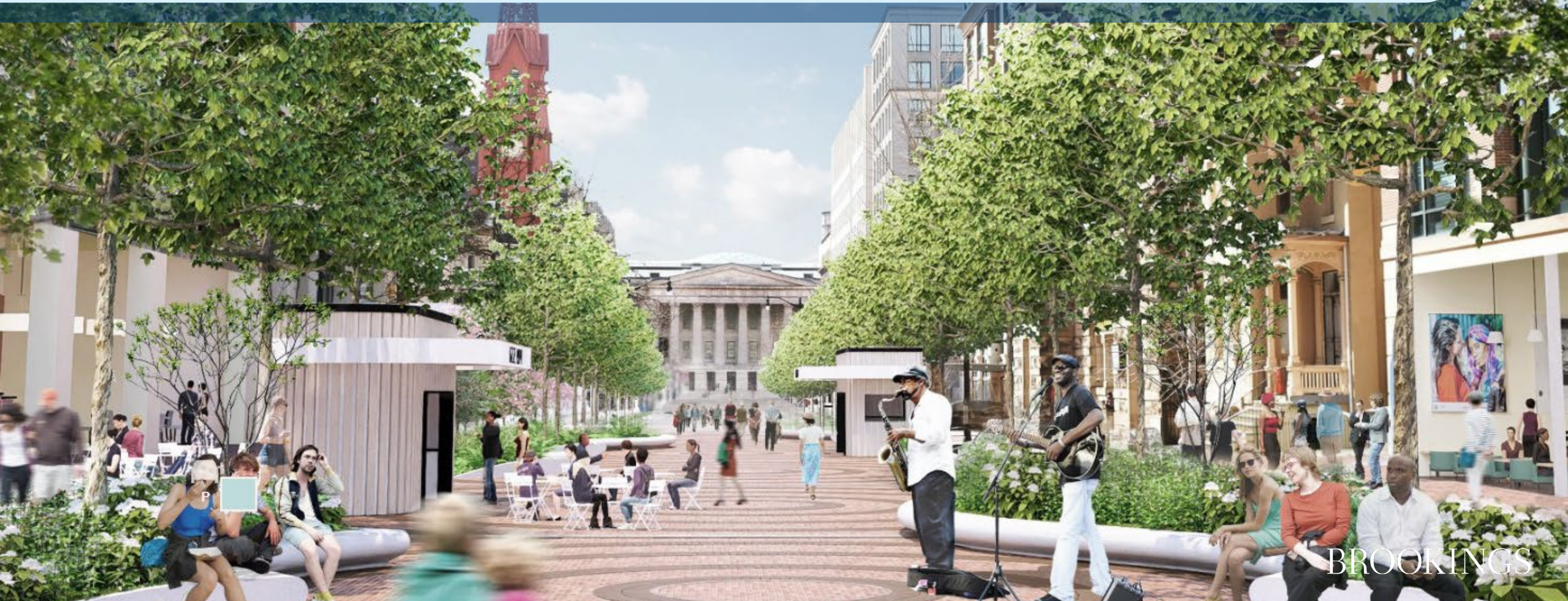
Land use planning

often lacks a focus on racial equity, economic, and community development.

Traditional placemaking

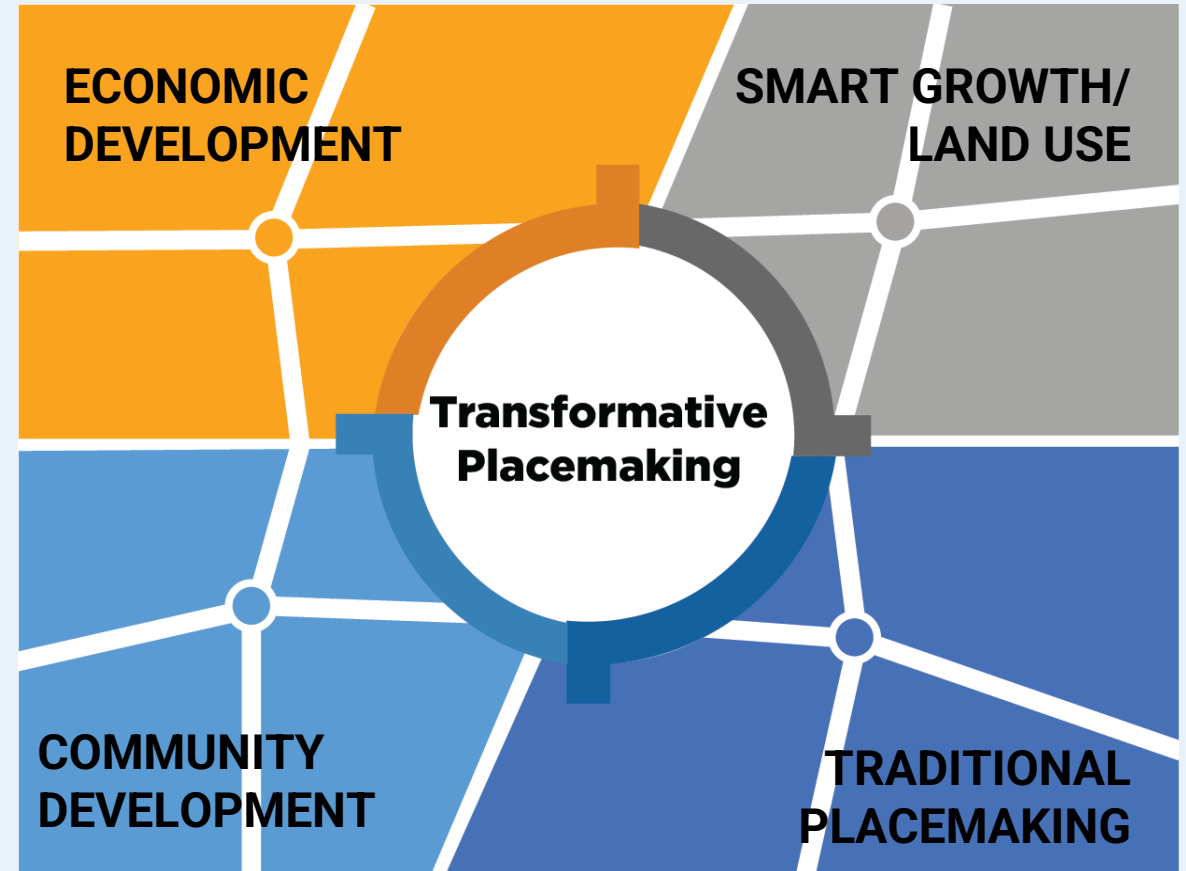
is limited in scope and scale.

Cities need to invest in transformative, integrated, place-based solutions

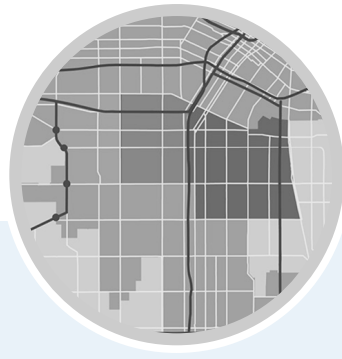


Transformative placemaking: An integrated, outcomes-focused approach

SCALE	Concentrates investments not only in public spaces or city blocks, but in hubs or 'districts' where economic, physical, and civic assets cluster and connect.
SCOPE	Encourages investments not only to create high quality places, but to foster equitable, opportunity-rich communities that generate broad based prosperity.
INTEGRATION	Breaks down siloes between key fields to advance integrated, systems-level solutions.



Example: Scale

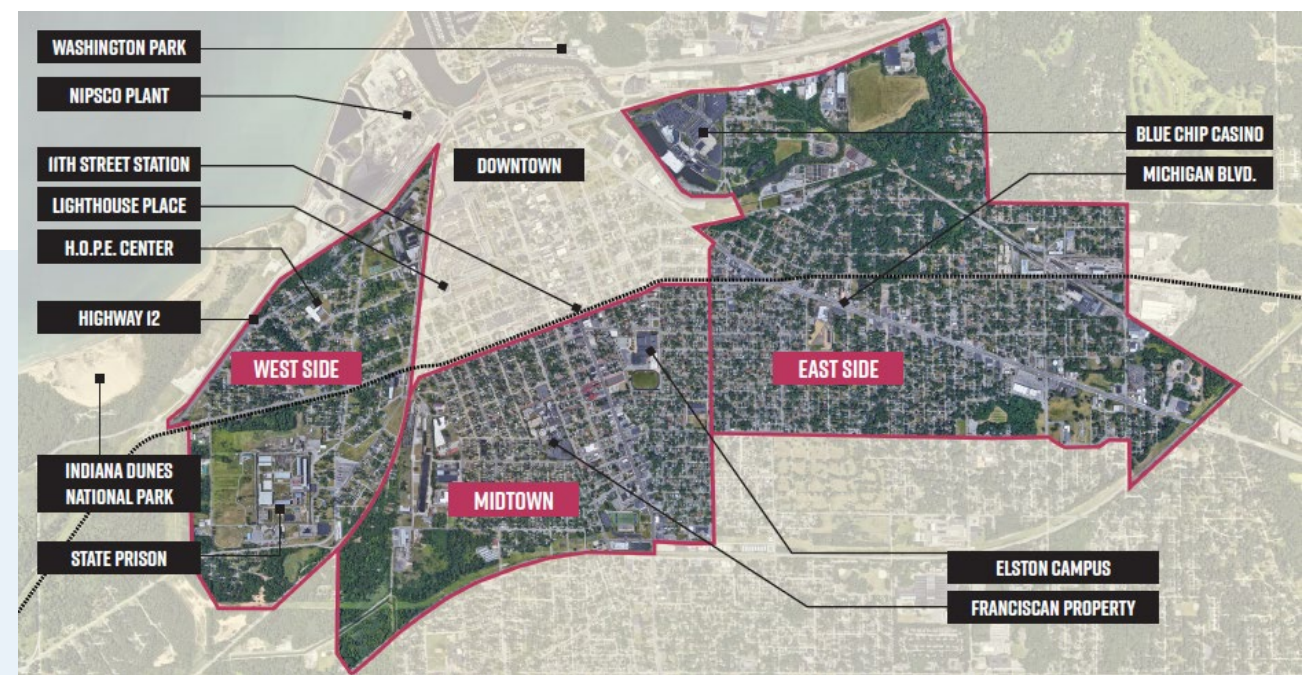


Economic inclusion
need

Economic Assets and
strengths

Community buy-in,
capacity, and
ownership

Regional significance



Example: Scope

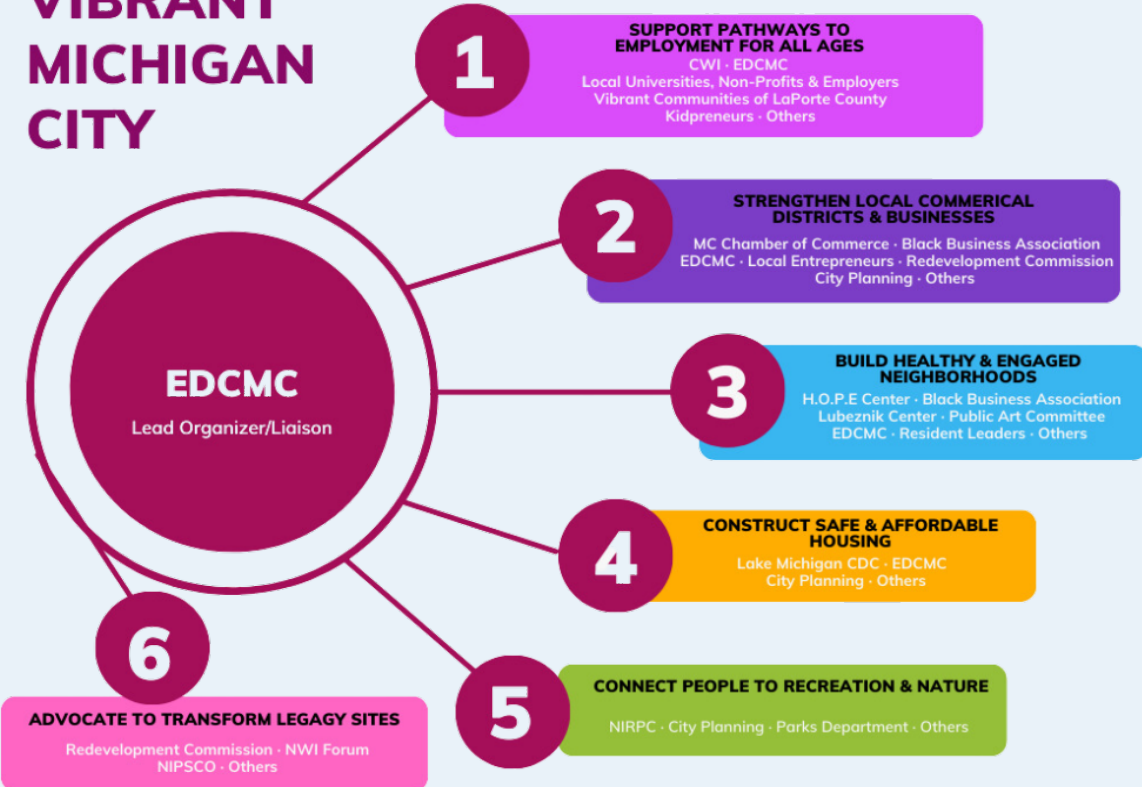


From traditional urban development	To inclusive catalytic development
Process: An emphasis on community engagement as an end in itself, not as a means of identifying clear outcomes	Outcomes: A clearer and ideally measurable definition of how the project area and surrounding neighborhood should change over time to qualify as inclusive
Short-term: A definition of inclusion as only something to be incorporated into the process of building the development	Sustained: A way of thinking about a development as not just a one-time project, but a platform for ongoing contributions to economic and social vibrancy
Narrow: A focus primarily on affordable housing, construction jobs, and investments in parks	Broad: Improvements in the full range of outcomes described in the Transformative Placemaking Framework, at a geography commensurate with the economic impact of the development*
Jobs: An emphasis on connecting people to employment opportunities rather than using the development as a means of wealth creation	Wealth: Efforts to enable developers led by Black, Indigenous, or other people of color (BIPOC) and/or those based in small communities to meaningfully shape or own the development and to enable community members to acquire an ownership stake in the project
Community engagement: A tendency to meet with community organizations in a way that might be extensive but also adversarial	Civic capacity: Investments in the knowledge and long-term capacity of community organizations so they can better identify and pursue their goals as partners with developers
Transactional: A penchant for addressing inclusion in limited circumstances in which powerful community organizations are able to push for it and a habit of defining inclusion inconsistently across different projects	Systemic: A process guided by shared principles or guidelines, not one that is dependent on one-off, project-by-project negotiations with community organizations that are costly and unpredictable for both sides

Example: Level of integration



VIBRANT MICHIGAN CITY



Transformative placemaking requires new...



Transformative placemaking requires new...



Knowledge

- 📍 Where are economic, physical, social, and civic assets clustered within your city?
- 📍 What varied and unique roles do these activity centers play in your economy? How do these roles contribute to inclusive or exclusive outcomes?
- 📍 How can this knowledge inform where and how to prioritize economic development, infrastructure, and placemaking investments in the city?

Transformative placemaking requires new...



Policies & investment strategies

- 📍 How is your city revamping outmoded land use and transportation policies to support dynamic, connected communities??
- 📍 How can its economic development investments better support the growth of new and existing local businesses, particularly in historically marginalized communities?
- 📍 How can place-centered investments be more intentional and less reactive to the latest new program or windfall opportunity?

Transformative placemaking requires new...



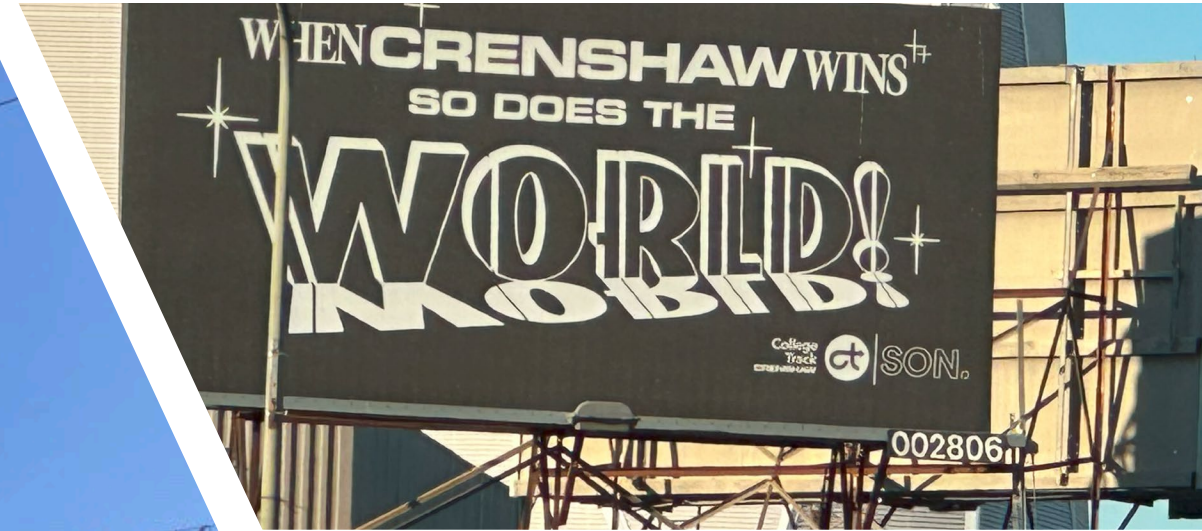
Practices & tools

- 📍 How are you adapting, designing, and sustaining place-centered investments over the long-term?
- 📍 How are you building the capacity of hyper-local place governance organizations to drive these outcomes?

Transformative placemaking shows us what's possible

“ We gained a transit stop and dreamed a bigger dream. This was us saying, ‘we’re going to do this in a greater way than you even imagined.’ We’re going to put together the greatest Black collection of art on the West Coast, and it’s going to be right here so that when people take that train, that’s all they’re going to look at. That’s the experience people are going to get when they come into our community.”

SOUTH LOS ANGELES STAKEHOLDER



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Knoxville, Tennessee. The foreground shows a large, multi-story brick building complex, possibly a university campus. To the right, a river flows, with a large white arch bridge and a smaller steel truss bridge crossing it. The middle ground is filled with various urban buildings, including a prominent white multi-story apartment or office building. The background features rolling green hills and mountains under a clear blue sky.

And the imperative of community-centered investments in growing more prosperous, resilient, and equitable cities



Thank you!

Hanna Love
hlove@brookings.edu

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