


YIMBYism – Yes In My Back Yard

Why Development is Good

Jesse Kanson-Benanav
A Better Cambridge

MEREDA 2017 Spring Conference

- 
1. Everyone please rise.
 2. Sit down if you have never attended a public meeting or hearing about a proposed development project near where you live.
 3. Sit down if you have never spoken up or offered testimony at such a meeting/hearing.
 4. Sit down if you have never spoken in favor of the development project that was the subject of a meeting/hearing.

There is a “new” acronym for everyone who is still standing – You’re “YIMBYs.”



Introducing: “YIMBY”



What is a YIMBY?

Yes

In

My

Back

Yard

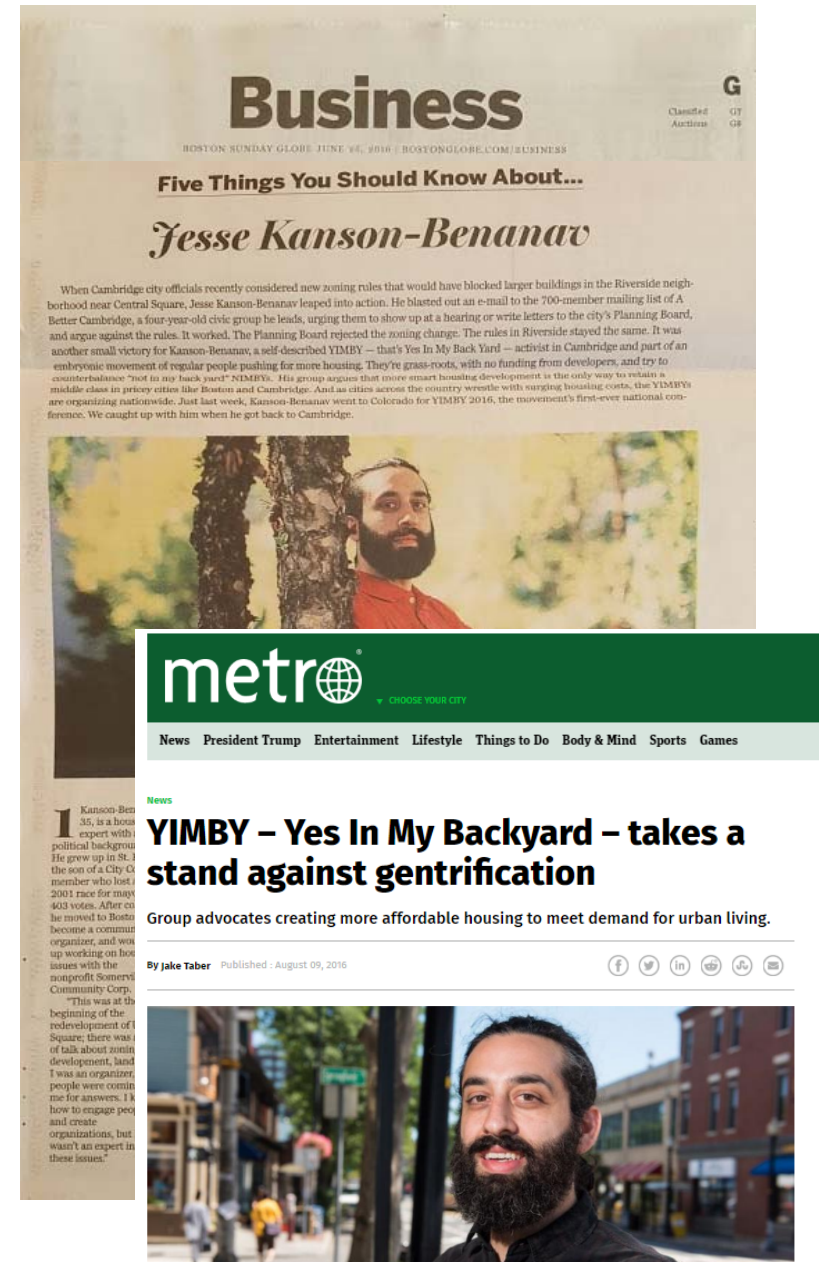
What is a YIMBY?

- Emerging political movement in U.S. (and global) of local citizens supporting higher density residential and mixed-use development in their communities



Who is this YIMBY?

- Trained urban planner
- 15 years in affordable housing advocacy, policy, and development
- Local politics & government
- Community leader/activist on urban growth issues in Cambridge, Mass. as founder & chairman **A Better Cambridge**





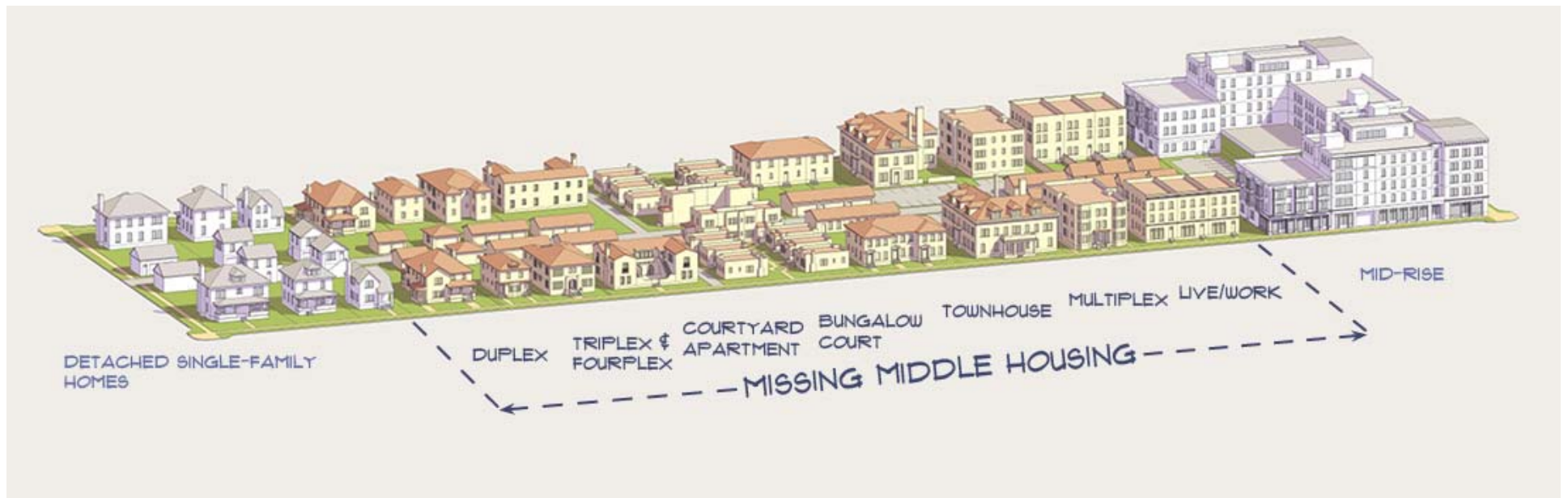
WHY YIMBY?

- New integrationist movement
- Higher density housing – affordable, mixed-income, & market rate
- Address the massive inequities/exclusion & environmental destruction caused by physical & social development of American communities



What is Density?

What is Density?



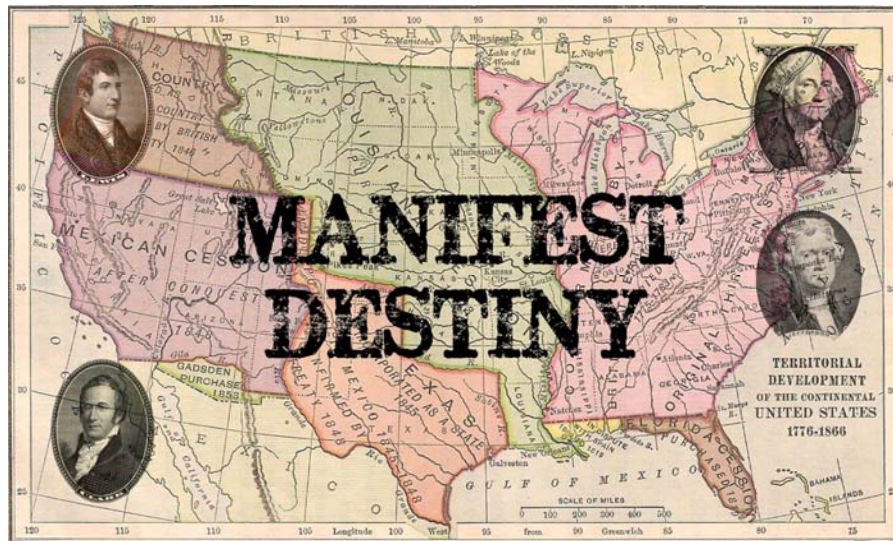
Density throughout US History

- European influence on colonial communities



Density throughout US History


- 19th century western land expansion



PRODUCTS WILL PAY FOR LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS!

MILLIONS OF ACRES

View on the Big Bear, between Combs and Ostr, representing Valley and Rolling Prairie Land in Nebraska.



IOWA AND NEBRASKA LANDS

FOR SALE ON **10** YEARS CREDIT
BY THE
Burlington & Missouri River R.R. Co.

AT 6 PER CT. INTEREST AND LOW PRICES.
Only One-Seventh of Principal Due Annually, beginning Four Years after purchase.
30 PER CENT. DEDUCTED FROM 10 YEARS PRICE, FOR CASH.

LAND EXPLORING TICKETS SOLD
and Cost allowed in First Interest paid, on Land bought in 30 days from date of ticket.
These **Land Exploring Tickets** are **FREE** in the State where the Land bought is located.
These **Land Exploring Tickets** are **FREE** at \$5, then to purchase United States Land at \$3.50 per Acre,
EXTRAORDINARY INDUCEMENTS on FREIGHT and PASSAGE are AFFORDED TO PURCHASERS and THEIR FAMILIES.

Address **GEO. S. HARRIS, LAND COMMISSIONER,**
or **T. H. LEAVITT, Asst Land Comm'r, Burlington, Iowa.**
Or apply to
FREE ROOMS for buyers to board themselves are provided at Burlington and Lincoln.

CIRCULARS are supplied GRATIS for distribution in ORGANIZING COLONIES and to induce individuals to emigrate WEST.

A SECTIONAL MAP, showing exact location of new IOWA LANDS is sold for 30 Cents, and of NEBRASKA LANDS for 20 Cents.

COMPASS, NEBRASKA 1897-98, BURLINGTON, IOWA, U.S.A.

Density throughout US History

- 20th Century Cities & Post-WWI Suburban Expansion

THE OREGONIAN, PORTLAND, MARCH 10, 1940.

PORTLAND HEIGHTS

IN A CLASS BY ITSELF HAS NO RIVALS IS ABOVE ALL

As a mother watching over the City, she reaches down and lifts her tired children from the dust and smoke of the crowded city, and places them on the beautiful evergreen hills overlooking the rivers and mountains

GREATER PORTLAND HEIGHTS—A GLIMPSE INTO THE NEAR FUTURE

ELEVATION
The Elevation of Portland Heights is from 600 to 1200 Feet, as shown by the diagram. The elevation of the city is from 100 to 200 Feet. The elevation of the city is from 100 to 200 Feet. The elevation of the city is from 100 to 200 Feet.

CAR SERVICE
During the winter there, while the roads are not yet open, the car service is the only way to get to the heights. The car service is the only way to get to the heights. The car service is the only way to get to the heights.

PRICES
Lots, tracts, and acreage, all parts of the Heights, at reasonable prices. \$1000 gives you the choice of 10 lots, about 100 ft. on the north, city water, gas and sewer, and a country where you can live in a quiet, peaceful, and beautiful place.

PORTLAND HEIGHTS
Portland Heights is a reality, not a dream. It contains the homes of people of education, culture and refinement, and there is no speculation in anything that might be sold.

TAKE A STROLL THROUGH THE PROPERTY TODAY
Enter on Harrison and Elsie in the Heights. North and South, at the demonstration home.

D. E. KEASEY & COMPANY
Exclusive Dealers in Portland Heights Property

Come to "The Little Office on the Big Hill," Opposite the Ainsworth School. Or Room 7 Chamber of Commerce. Phone Main 2159

Levittown OFFERS every modern city convenience *plus* country comfort \$8490 at down-to-earth cost

3 different exterior, all authentic Cape Cod architecture

compare the structural and necessary features of these remarkable homes, built by Levitt & Sons!

compare the community advantages only Levittown offers, at NO EXTRA COST!

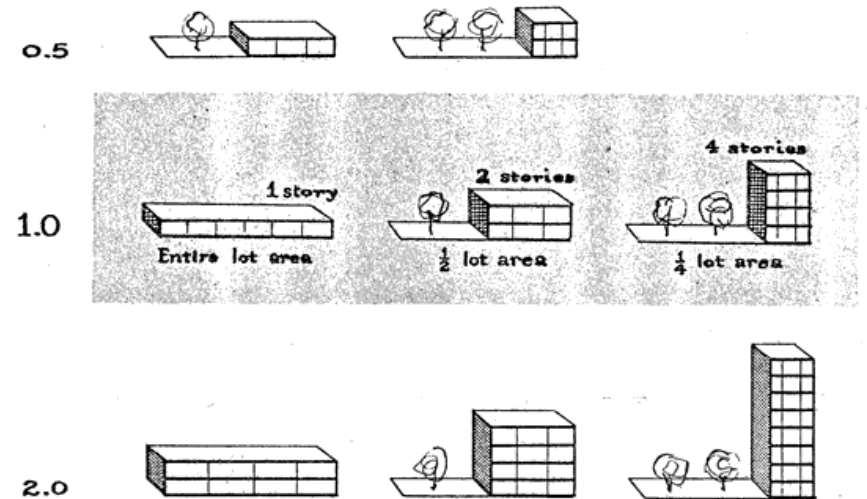
- Spacious lot, minimum 4,000 square feet, mature shrubs, lawn and trees.
- Modern kitchen, with exhaust fan, 6-4 cup and refrigerator, double washers, Tupperware, steel sink and steel cabinets.
- 3 comfortable, beautiful bedrooms, with choice of color schemes.
- Colored sheeted bathroom, with built-in tub and shower.
- 8 full, modern schools within walking distance.
- 4 complete shopping centers, within minutes of your home.
- Fast, frequent transportation—138 buses daily from Washington and Blister the station.
- 8 supervised championship swimming pools, exclusively for residents.
- Adult education courses.
- Nursery school.
- Subsidized program.
- Many fully-maintained playgrounds, tennis courts, and more.
- Active community center, including theatre group.
- Youth center and organized activities.
- Community library, including mobile van.
- Movie theatre and bowling alley.
- No through traffic streets, safe for children.
- U. S. Post Office.

JOHN W. Pergola Insurance — Real Estate 3475 Hesperian Drive Levittown, N.Y. 11756 PE-5-4636

"After total war can come total living"

Impacts of Suburban Expansion

- *Exclusionary land use policies = exclusionary communities*



Impacts of Suburban Expansion

- *Exclusionary land use policies = exclusionary communities*



Impacts of Suburban Expansion

- Racial segregation
- *Natural or artificially established **barriers** will prove effective in protecting a **neighborhood** and the locations within it from adverse influences . . . [including] prevention of the infiltration of business and industrial uses, **lower class occupancy, and inharmonious racial groups** – FHA, 1938*



SECTION I
RESIDENTIAL SECURITY MAP

- LEGEND
- A FIRST GRADE
 - B SECOND GRADE
 - C THIRD GRADE
 - D FOURTH GRADE
 - SPARSELY BUILT UP
(COLOR INDICATES GRADE)
 - INDUSTRIAL
 - COMMERCIAL
 - UNDEVELOPED OR FARMLAND
(NO PROBABLE CHANGE WITHIN 5 YEARS)

PREPARED BY
DIVISION OF RESEARCH AND STATISTICS
WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE
APPRAISAL DEPARTMENT
HOME OWNERS' LOAN CORPORATION
FEB. 1, 1936

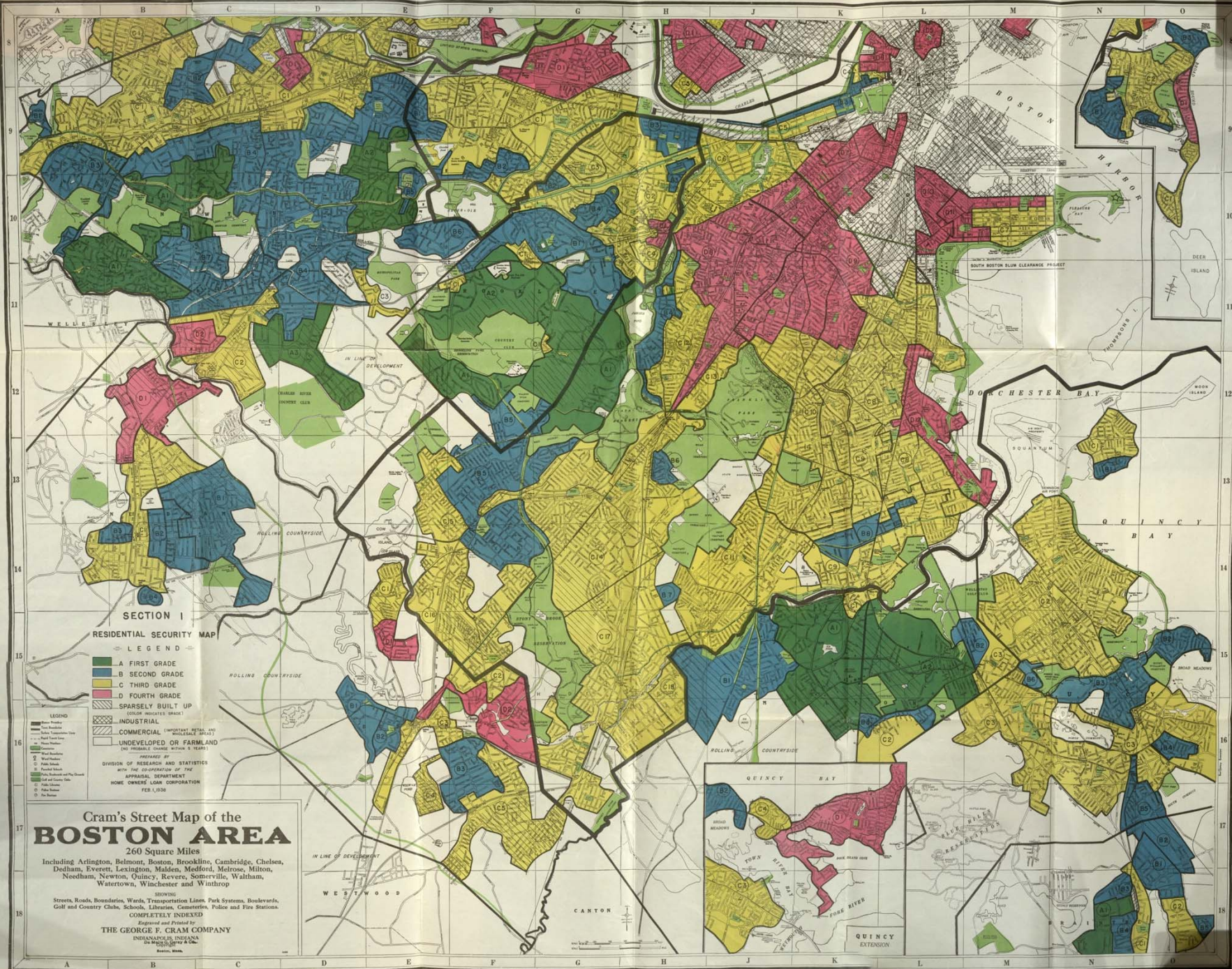
**Cram's Street Map of the
BOSTON AREA**
260 Square Miles

Including Arlington, Belmont, Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea,
Dedham, Everett, Lexington, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Milton,
Needham, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Somerville, Waltham,
Watertown, Winchester and Winthrop

SHOWING
Streets, Roads, Boundaries, Wards, Transportation Lines, Park Systems, Boulevards,
Golf and Country Clubs, Schools, Libraries, Cemeteries, Police and Fire Stations,
COMPLETELY INDEXED

Revised and Published by
THE GEORGE F. CRAM COMPANY
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA
1000 PUBLISHERS BLDG.
BOSTON, MASS.

CANTON



Impacts of Suburban Expansion

- Urban Divestment



Impacts of Suburban Expansion

- Fossil Fuel/Greenhouse Gas Emissions



It's Making '55 Famous—For Fun!

For sheer driving pleasure, Chevrolet's stealing the thunder from the high-priced cars.

Let's be frank. Up to now, maybe there were reasons for wanting one of the higher priced cars. If you desired something really special in the way of driving fun, you simply had to pay a premium to get it. Usually, a big one!

Not any more! The Motoramic Chevrolet is taking the play away from the high-priced cars with pure excitement on wheels!

Chevrolet's new "Turbo-Fire V8" puts a

heaping hoodful of fun under your foot—162 h.p.! (Special to adventure lovers: 180 h.p. "Super Turbo-Fire V8" is optional at extra cost.) You can also choose from the two highest powered 6's in the low-price field.

As for drives, just name it. Chevrolet offers Overdrive, super-smooth Powerglide (extra-cost options) and a new and finer Synchro-Mesh transmission.

Find out how the Motoramic Chevrolet puts new fun in *your* driving life! Take the key at your Chevrolet dealer's—and you'll want it for keeps! . . . Chevrolet Division of General Motors, Detroit 2, Michigan.

Motoramic  See and drive it at your Chevrolet dealer's adtlp.com



Impacts of Suburban Expansion

- Loss of farmland, natural landscapes/green fields





Solution: Densify American Communities

Diversity of Housing Types

Efficient Land Patterns

Neighborhood Compatibility

Services and Programs

Infrastructure Improvements

Transit and walking choices

Yes in My Backyard!



Why Density?

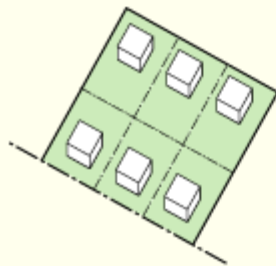
Density through Smart Growth



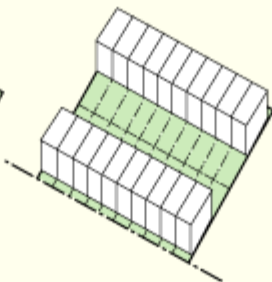
Benefits of Density: Housing

- Inclusive communities

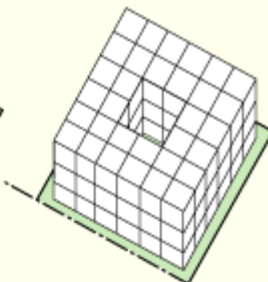
Housing Density
Dwelling Units Per Acre (du/ac)



Single Family Homes
(4-10 du/ac)



Townhomes
(20-40 du/ac)



Apartments
(50-100 du/ac)

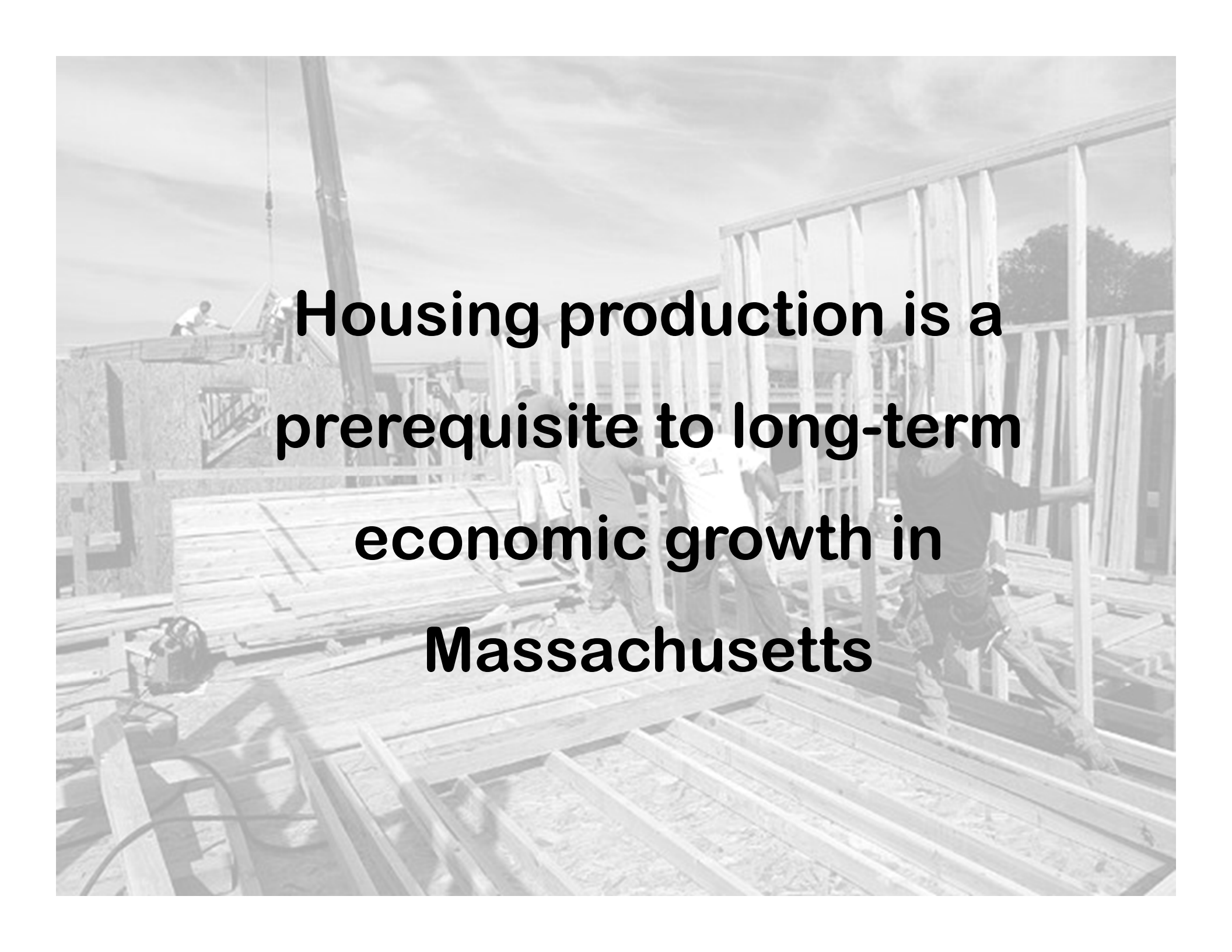


Other Benefits of Density





**What's the problem in Metro Boston
today?**

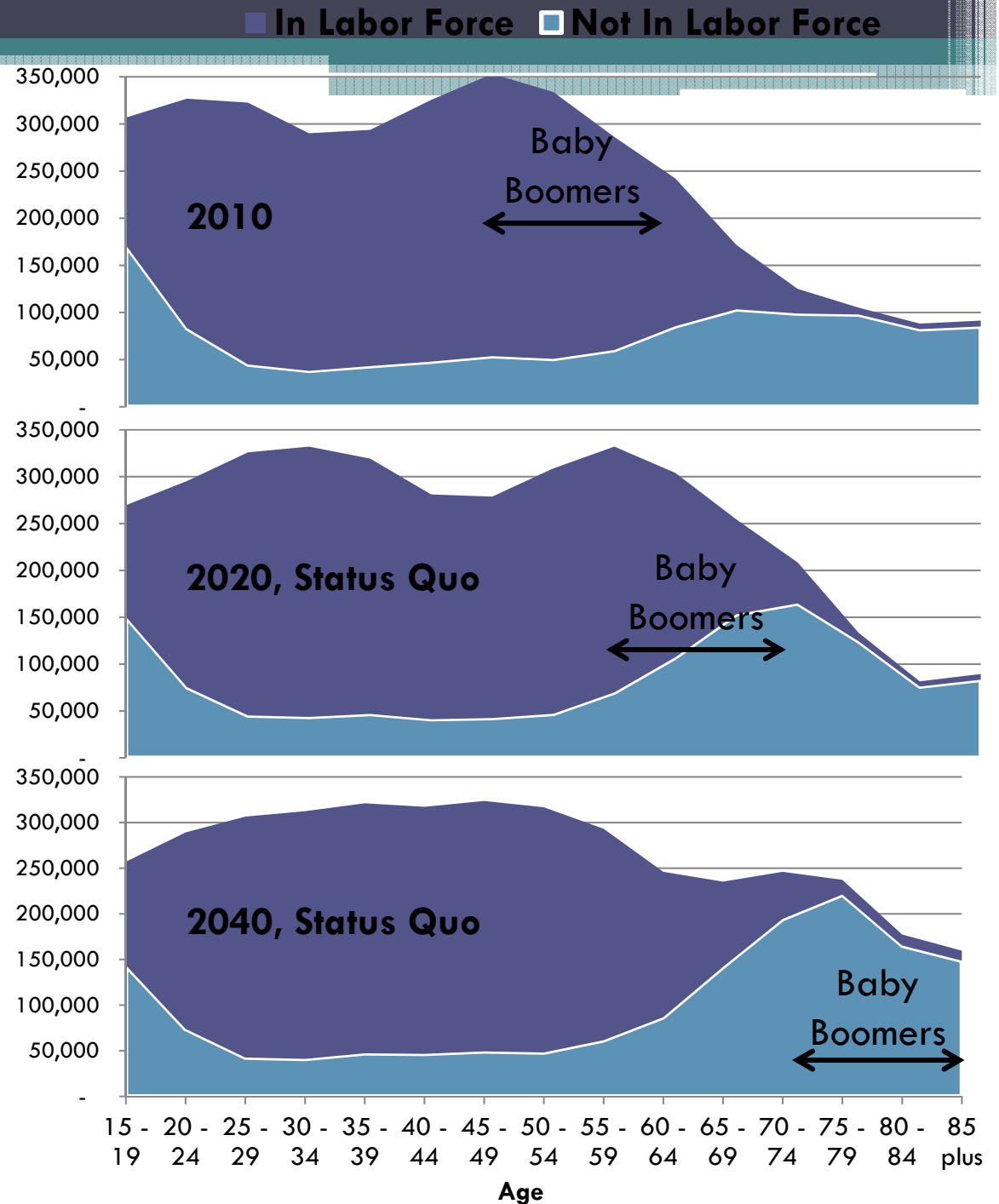
A grayscale photograph of a construction site. In the foreground, there are wooden joists and beams. In the middle ground, several workers are visible, some standing and some working on a structure. In the background, a crane is visible, and the sky is cloudy. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**Housing production is a
prerequisite to long-term
economic growth in
Massachusetts**

Baby Boomers
comprise 49% of
region's labor force

One million workers
born before 1970 will
retire by 2030
(39% of labor force)

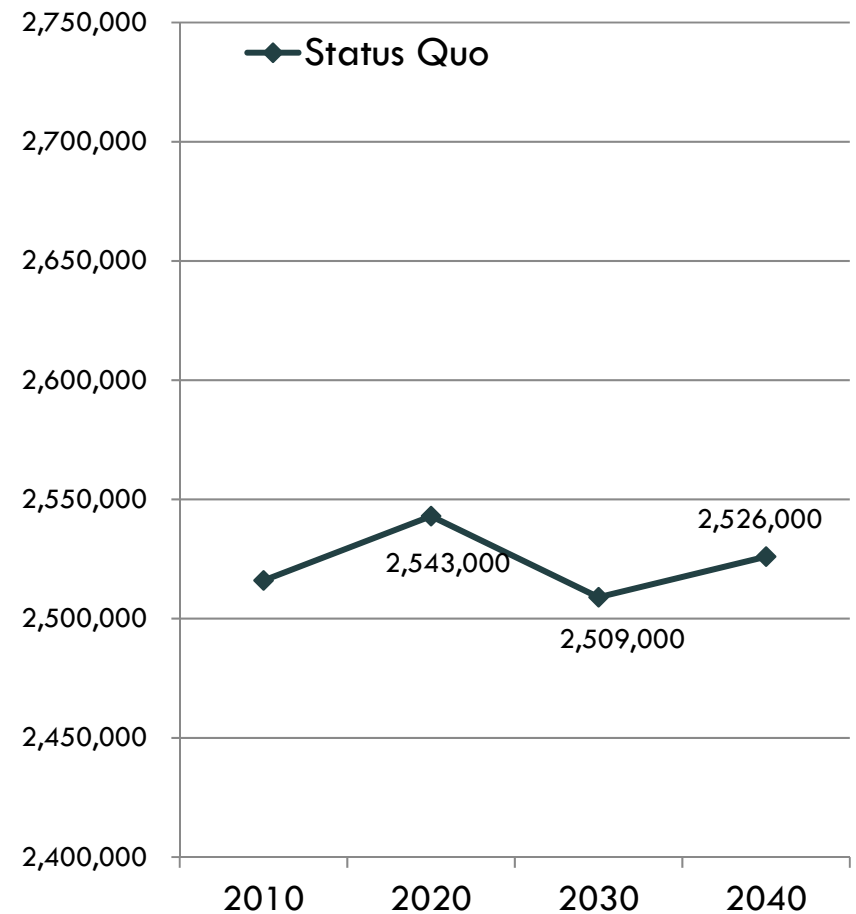
Region is not
producing /importing
enough young
workers to fill vacant
positions



A stronger region is possible

Continued outmigration
=
no labor force growth

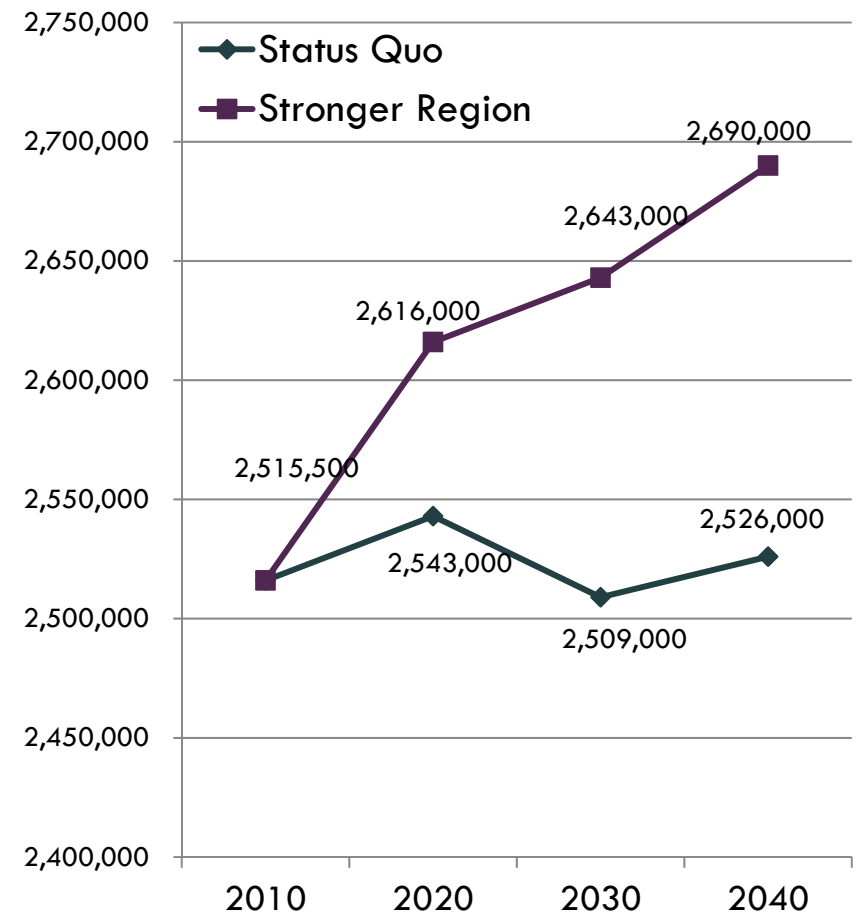
**Population in the Labor Force,
Metro Boston, 2010 - 2040,
Status Quo vs. Stronger Region**



A stronger region is possible

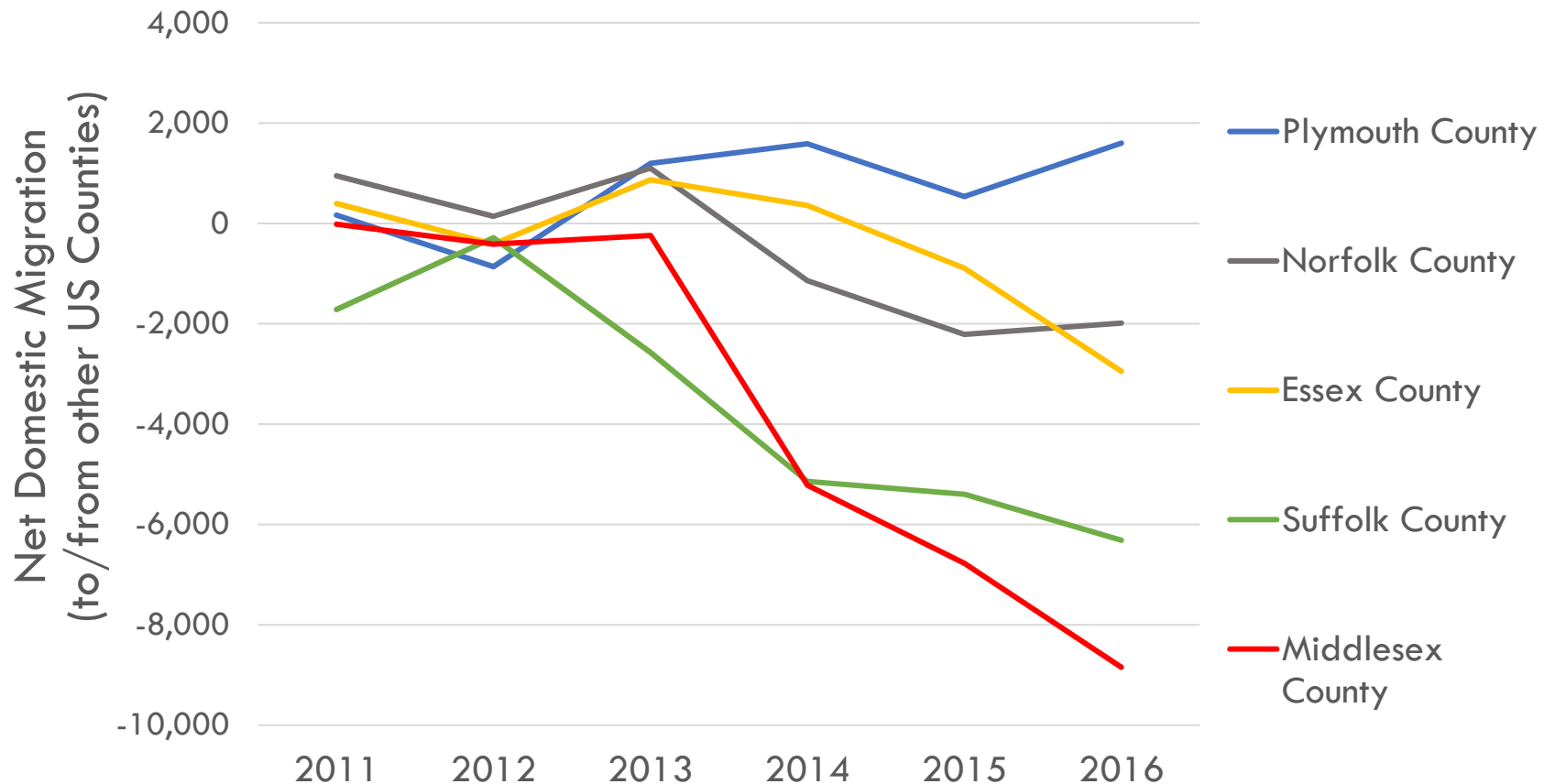
Net in-migration of
10,000 per year
=
+175,000 workers by
2040
(7% increase)

**Population in the Labor Force,
Metro Boston, 2010 - 2040,
Status Quo vs. Stronger Region**



We are Struggling to be Stronger

Net Domestic Migration, Metro Boston Counties, 2011 - 2016

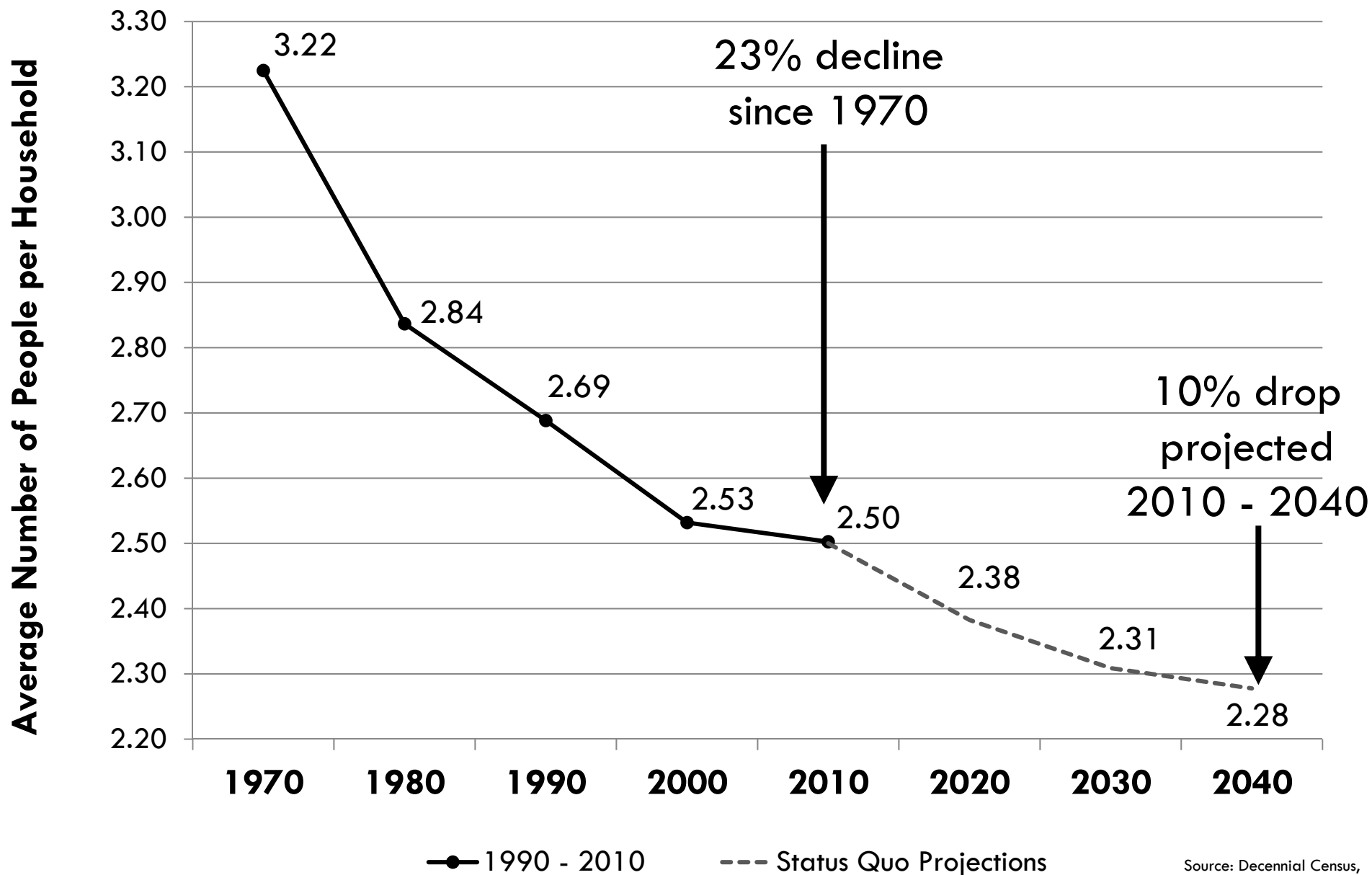


**Metro Boston now losing 18,000 residents annually to other states
housing affordability is a major culprit**

**Housing demand:
Population growth is only
half the equation (or less)**



Average Household Size, Metro Boston, 1970 - 2040



Same number of residents form more households, need more housing units

2010

250 people =



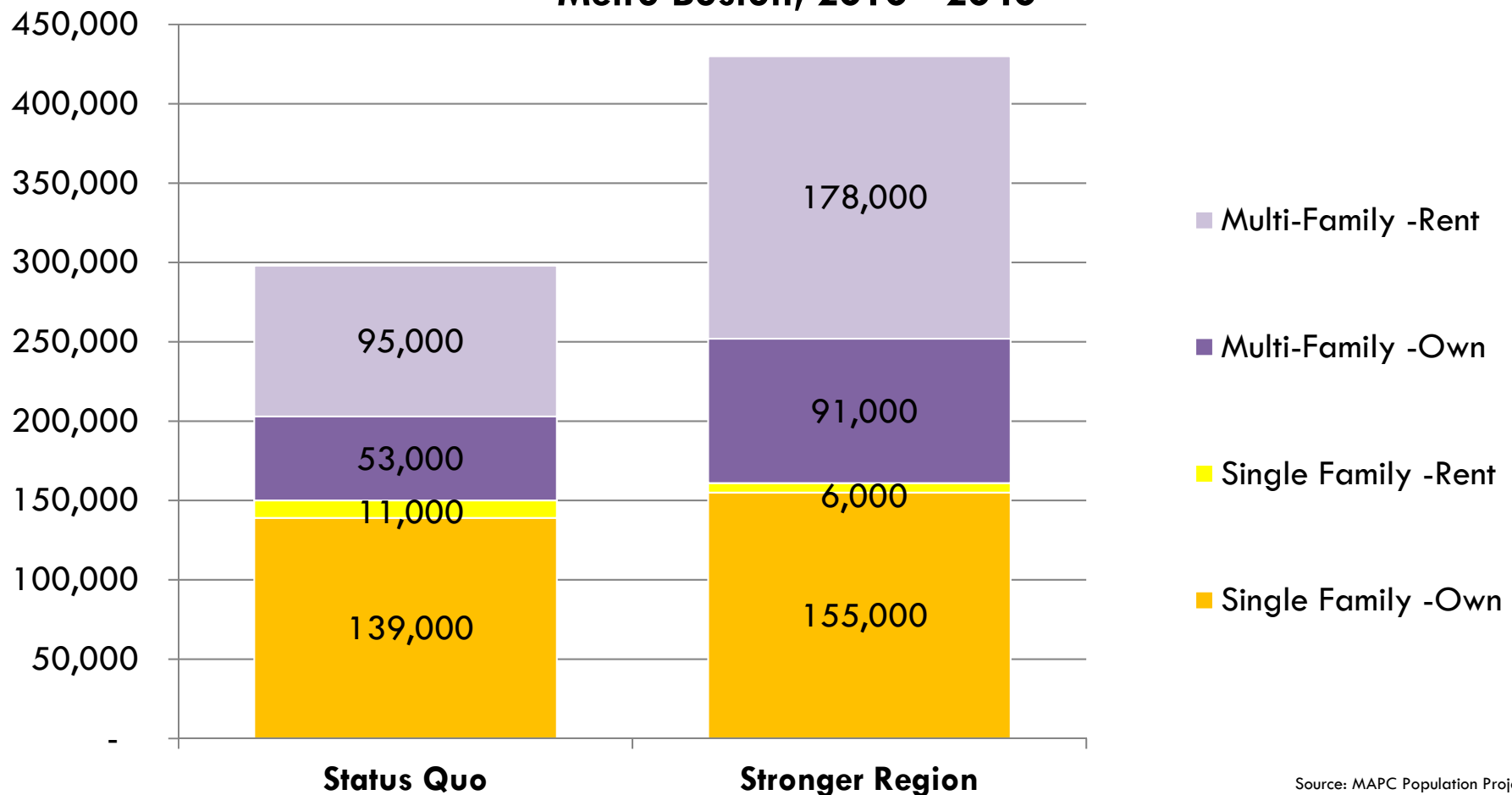
2040

250 people =



Long-term economic growth requires 435,000 new units in Metro Boston, ~500,000 units statewide, by 2040

**Total Net Housing Demand, by Type,
Metro Boston, 2010 - 2040**

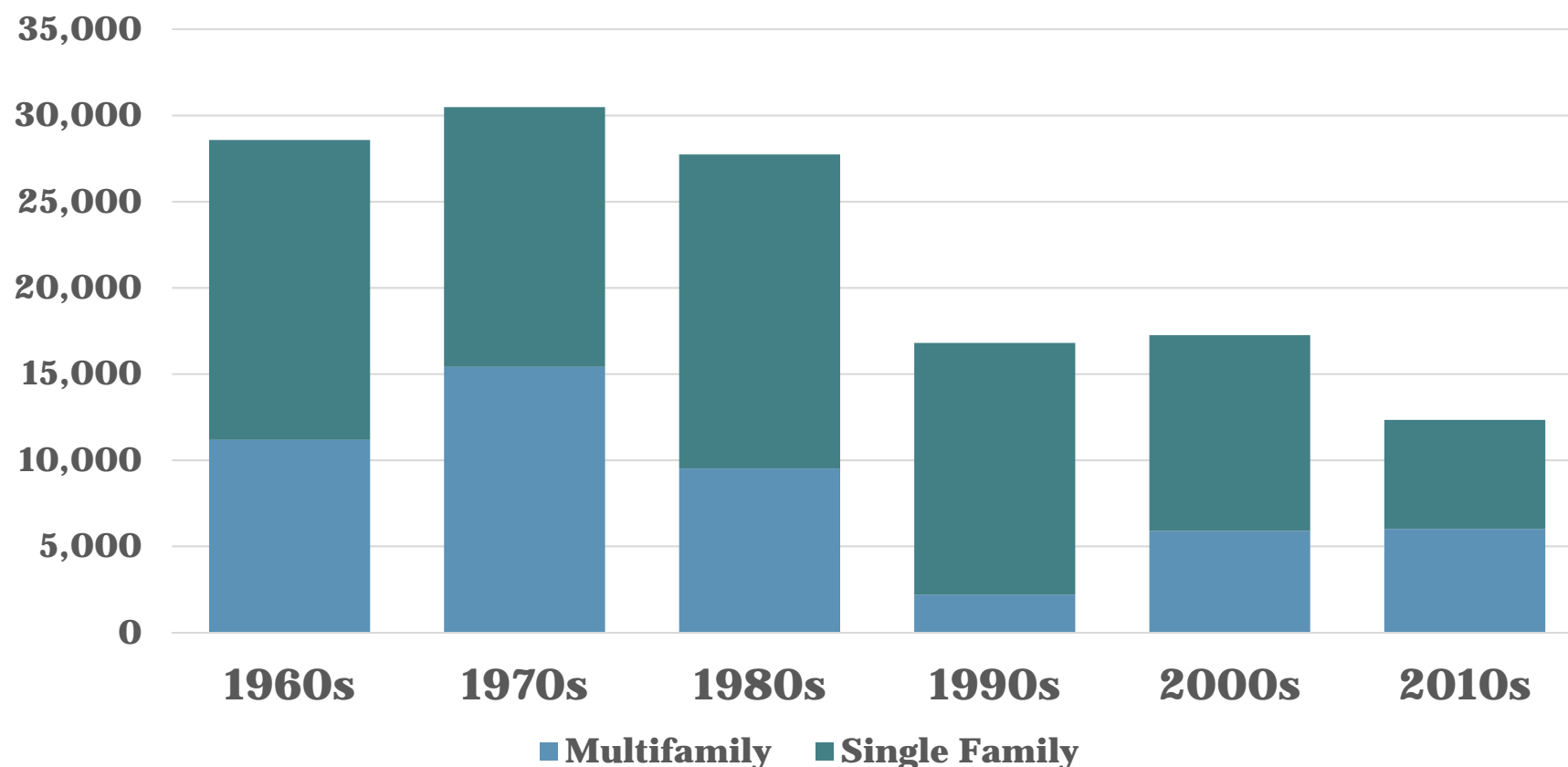




How are we doing in Metro Boston?

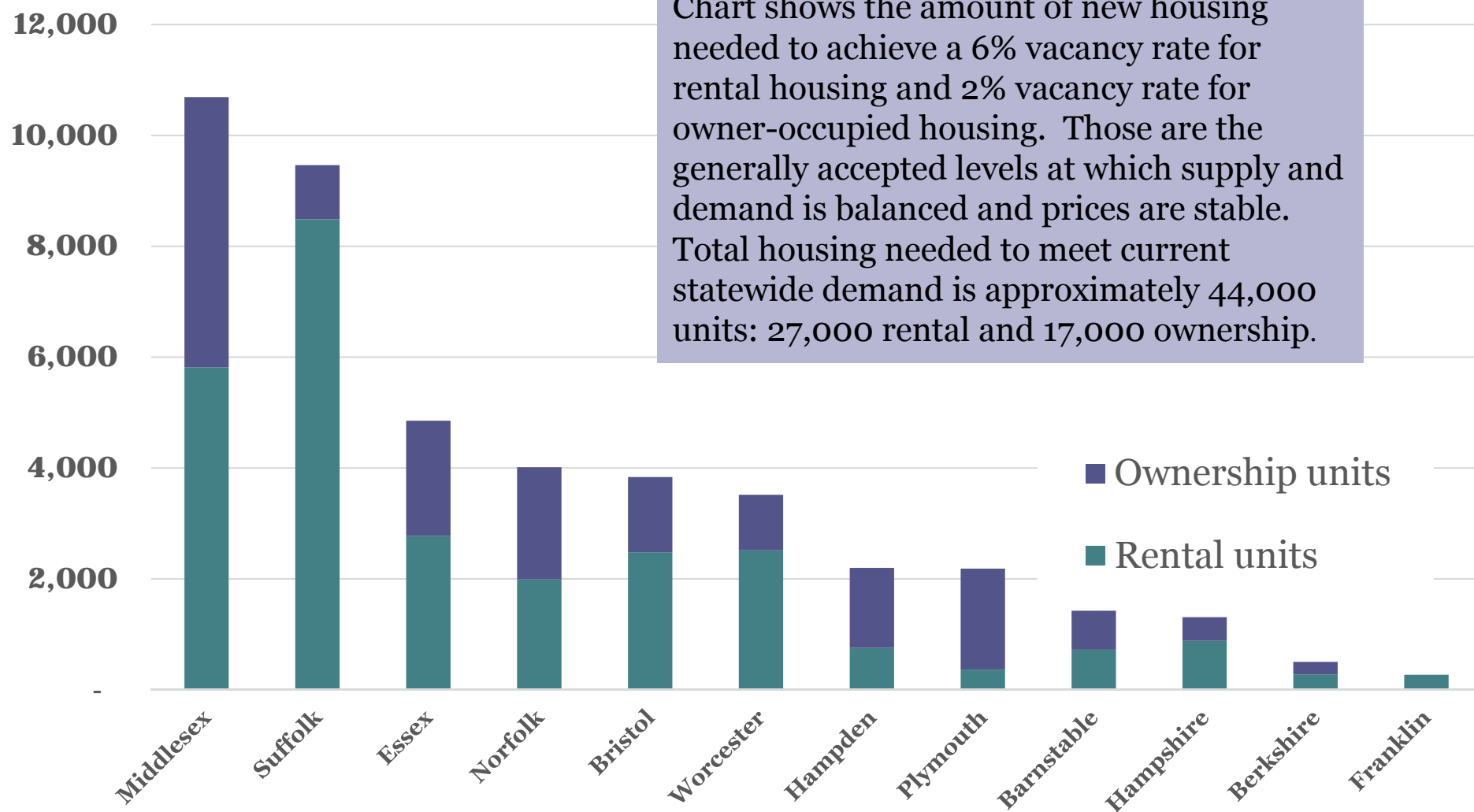
In recent years Massachusetts cities and towns have permitted less new housing than at almost any point since the 1950s

Annual Housing Production in Massachusetts by Decade



Data from U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permit Survey. Note: in this and in all subsequent graphics, multifamily is defined as a structure with 2+ units and permits are as reported by cities and towns with imputed data by the Census Bureau for communities that fail to report.

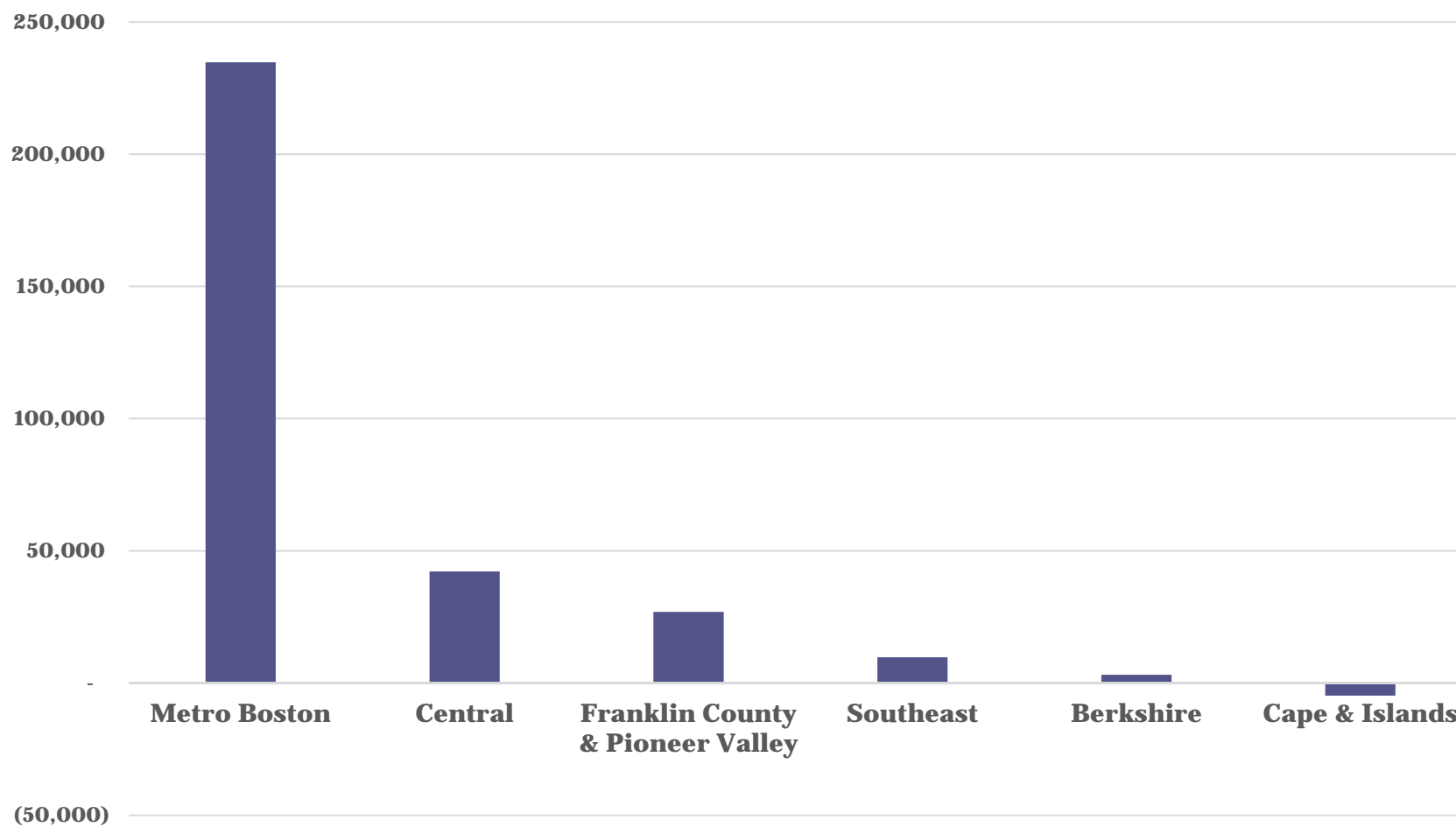
Without adding *any* new people or *any* more jobs, the state's housing supply is already about 44,000 units short of demand



MHP analysis of county-level data from 2015 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Both the current housing supply gap and projected need for new housing through 2030 are heavily concentrated in metro Boston

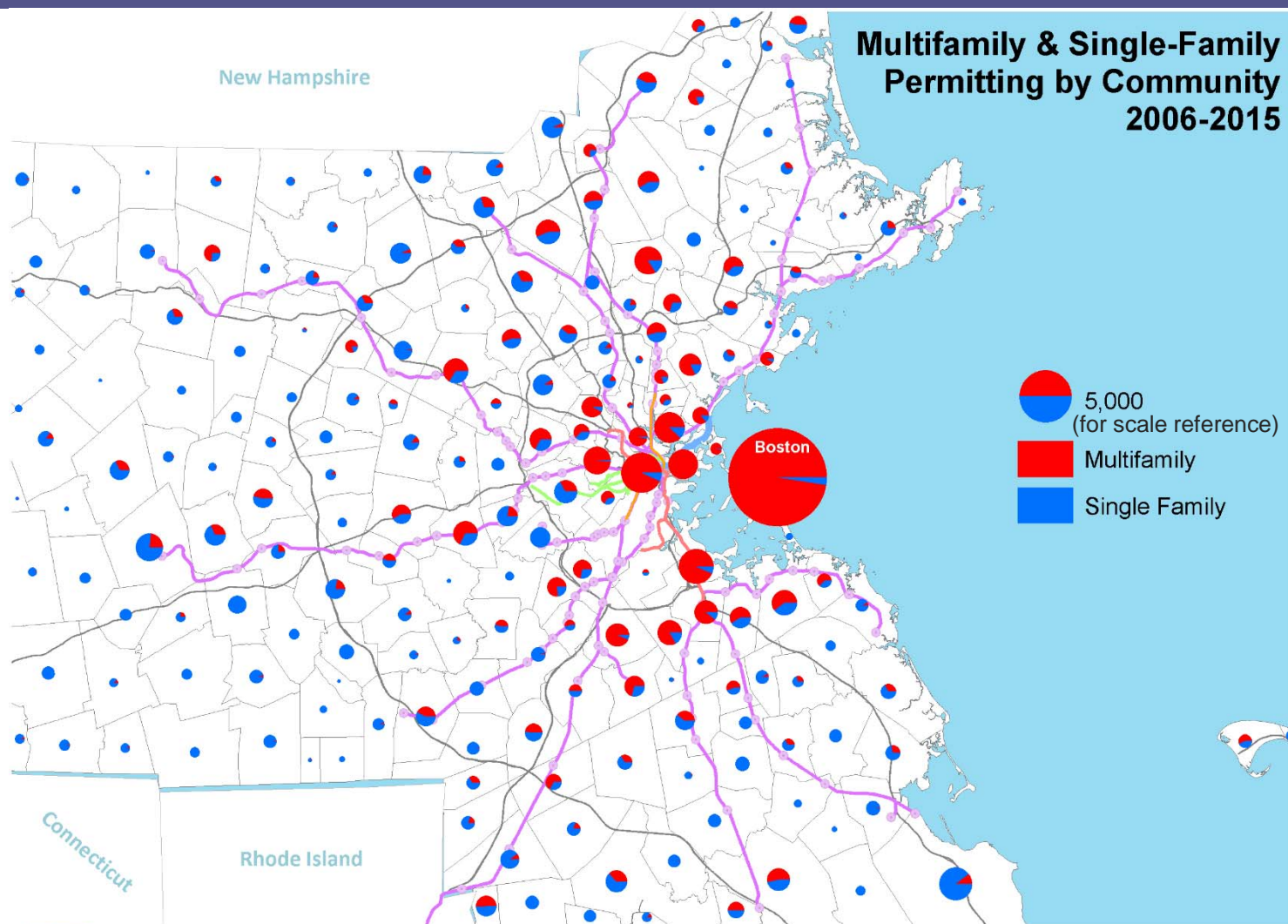
Projected Net New Households, 2015 to 2030



Data from forthcoming report for MHP, DHCD and the Urban Land Institute by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council

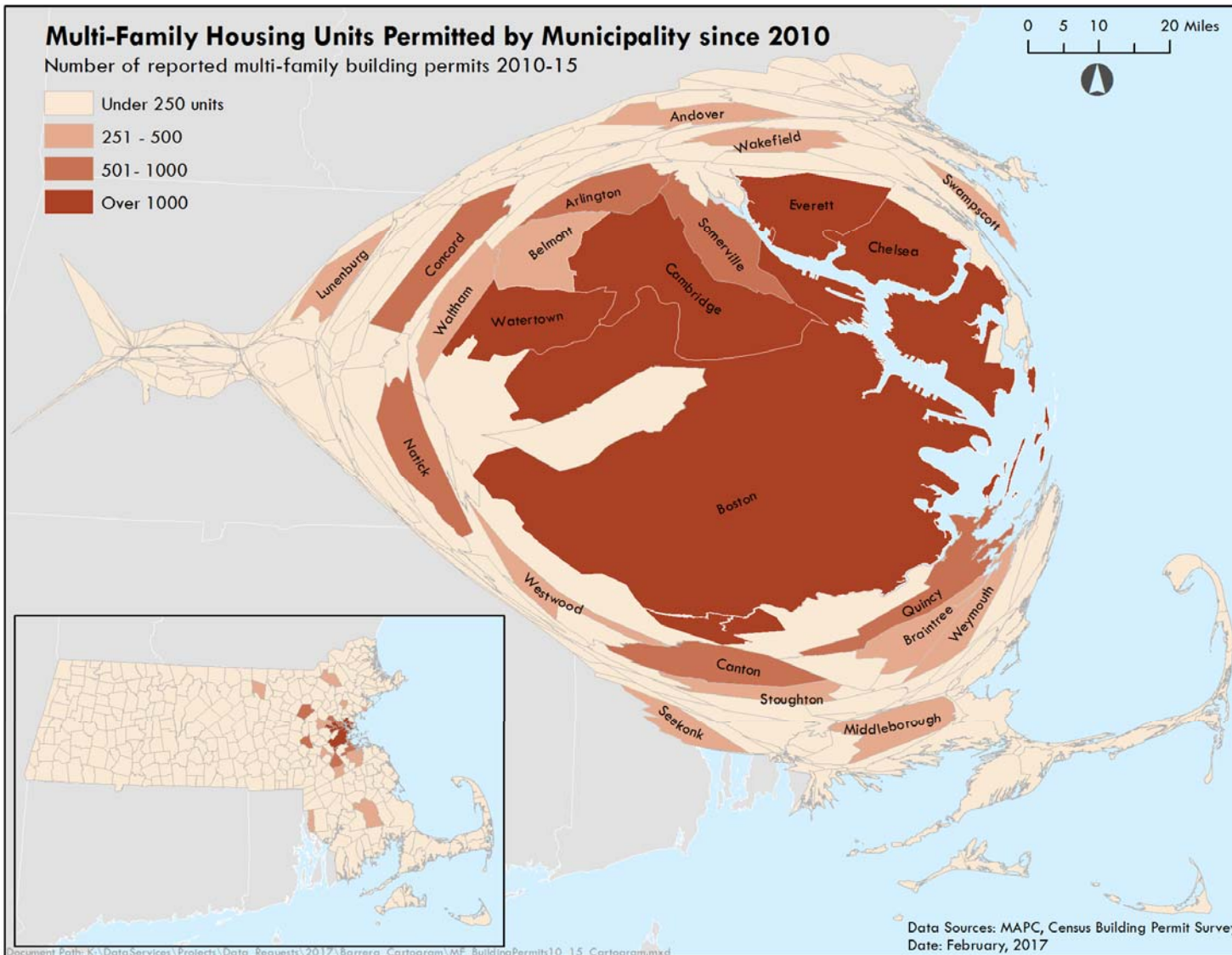


In total, not nearly enough housing is being constructed to meet demand – particularly multifamily housing, which represents about two-thirds of the state's projected market need



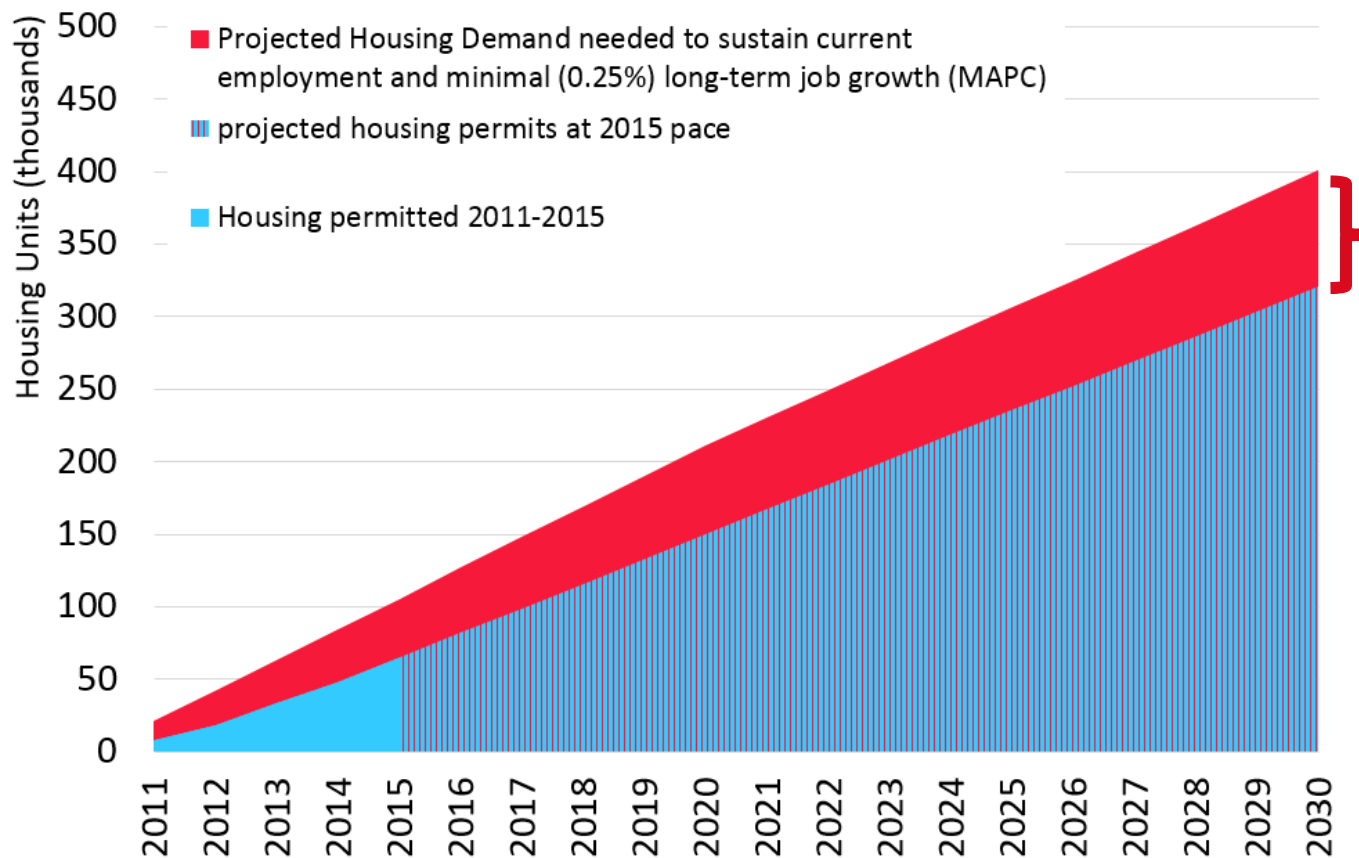
Created by Massachusetts Housing Partnership - January 2017
Data source:
U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permit Survey, 2006-2015

More than half of the multifamily units permitted statewide over the last five years were in just five cities and towns: Boston, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett and Watertown



Even if the pace of new housing construction is maintained at 2015 levels – the highest level in a decade -- there will still be a housing shortage of over 80,000 units by 2030

**Massachusetts Housing Production Compared to Projected Demand
2011-2015**



Multifamily permitting in 2015 was at its highest level since the late 1980s. Preliminary data suggests that both total permitting and multifamily permitting declined in 2016, which would make the projected gap in 2030 even larger



Enter YIMBY

Nothing really ever happens unless the *NYT* writes about it

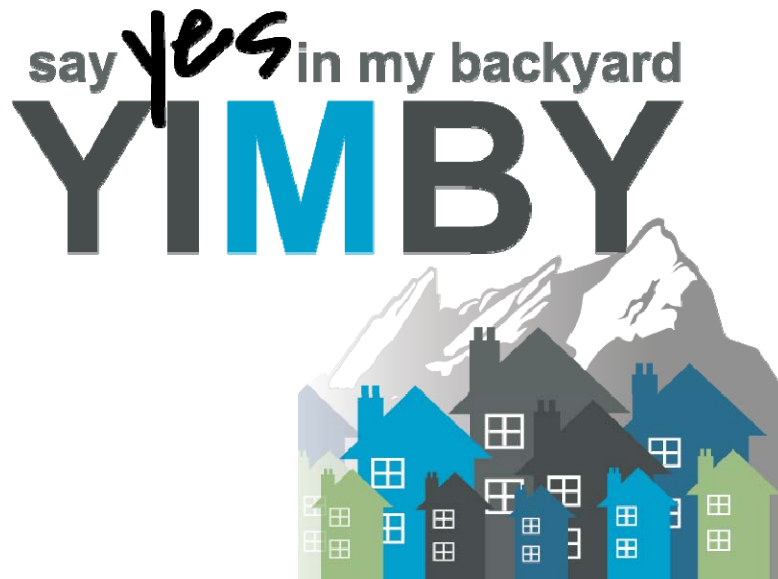


“In Cramped and Costly Bay Area, Cries to Build, Baby, Build”

An activist who calls her group BARF is pushing for more housing, pitting cranky homeowners and the political establishment against newcomers who want the region to make room for them, too.

By [CONOR DOUGHERTY](#) APRIL 16, 2016

First National YIMBY Conference



Boulder Daily Camera:

“Boulder to Host Country’s First Official ‘YIMBY’ Conference”

Battle soaring housing costs by building, advocates urge

By Alex Burness, May 14, 2016

Next City:

“YIMBY Movement Heats Up in Boulder”

By Josh Stephens, June 21, 2016

Growing National Movement

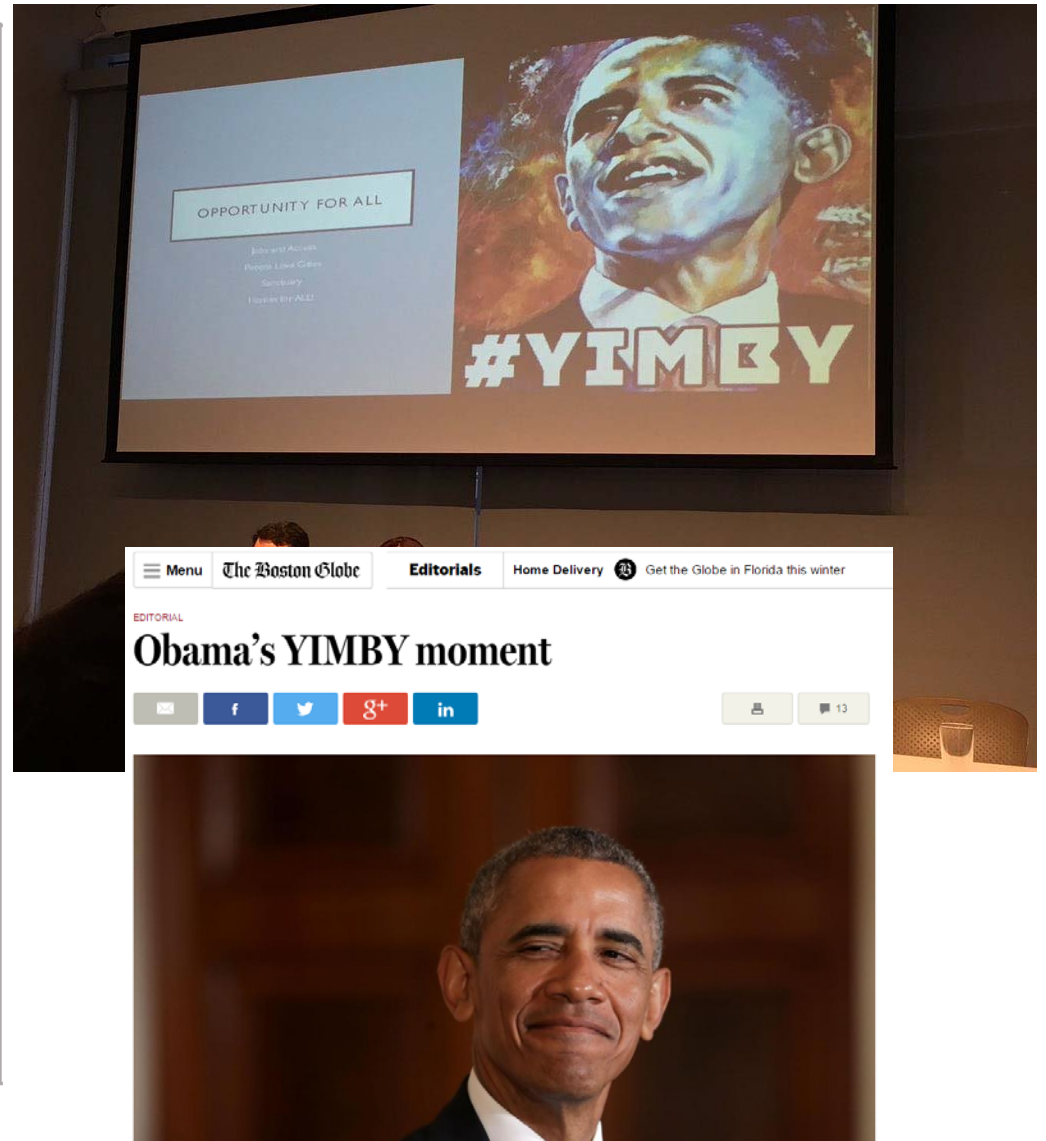


Former “YIMBY-in-Chief”



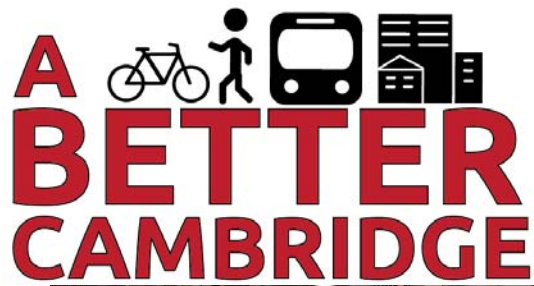
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

September 2016



Growing National Movement

- Economically successful cities that are attractive places to live but that have really strong restrictions on building new housing.

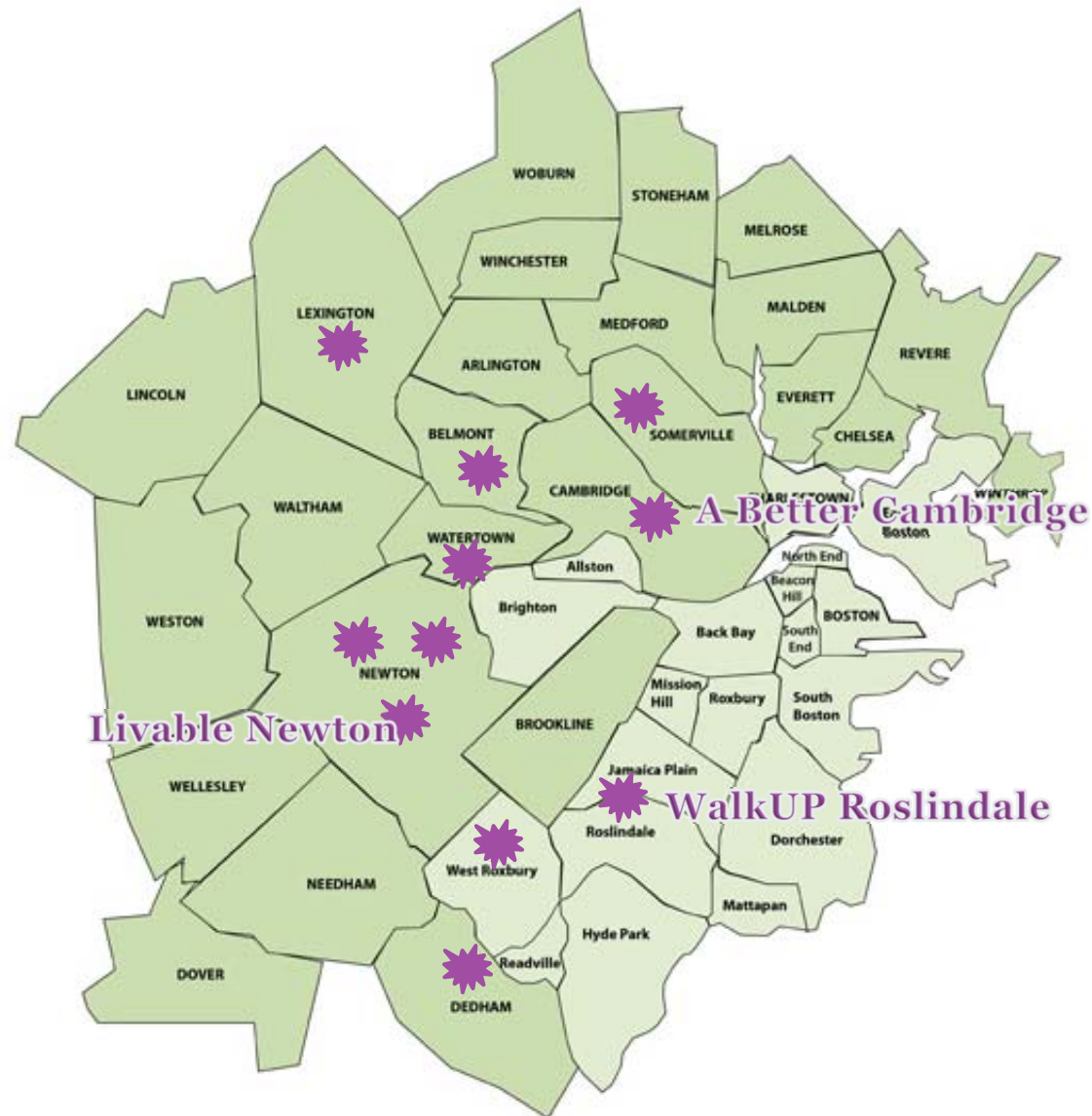




Growing National Movement

- No national organization or 'manifesto'
- Informal network of local activists and organizations
- Particular urban development challenges of their own communities

YIMBY in Greater Boston





A Better Cambridge



Our Vision

- We believe that Cambridge has always been, and should continue to be a forward looking community that thrives on the diversity and openness of all of its residents. For Cambridge and the region to continue to live up to its promise, it needs to be innovative and open to ensuring it is inclusive to all new and potential residents, with equal access to the amenities and opportunities that make our city and region thrive.
- When we allow for more residential development — of all sizes and character — we allow new residents to join our neighborhoods and existing residents to afford to stay, creating more opportunities and options for everyone. We are part of the growing YIMBY (yes in my backyard) movement across the nation that understands increased housing production as the only solution to the affordability crisis and a crucial step in environmental sustainability and fighting climate change.



Five Point Mission

- Diversity
- Sustainability
- Growth
- Livability
- Dialogue

Five Point Mission: Diversity



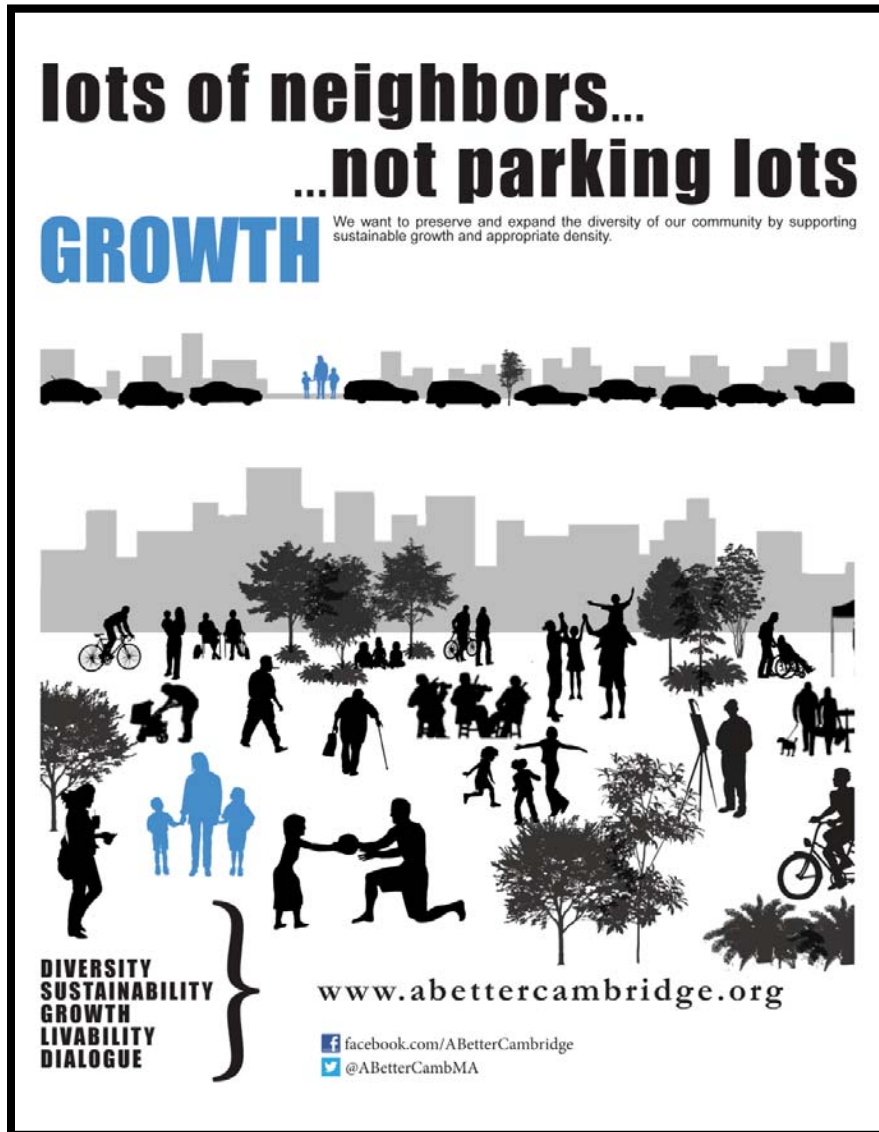
- We want to strengthen the social, cultural, and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.

Five Point Mission: Sustainability



- We want to build a strong and sustainable community where current and future residents will be able to work, shop, and play near their homes.

Five Point Mission: Growth



- We want to preserve and expand the diversity of our community by supporting sustainable growth and appropriate density.

Five Point Mission: Dialogue



- We want to support open and constructive engagement between all parties to the planning process, based on mutual respect for differing views.



Founding ABC

The Personal is Political

What ABC Does

- Advocate for policy: zoning changes, planning processes
- Support smart growth development proposals
- Education
 - Candidate survey & ratings
 - Candidate forums
 - Educational forums

Supporting Development



Candidate Ratings



2015 CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE RATINGS

* ANALYSIS BASED ON CANDIDATE RESPONSES TO A BETTER CAMBRIDGE CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

- Questions 1 – 10 rated on scale of 2 (maximum) to -2 (minimum). Zero indicates neutral or cannot determine based on response.
- Question 11 rated on a scale of 10 (maximum) to 0 (minimum).
- Question 12 rated on a scale of 15 (maximum points) to 0 (minimum points).

	DENSITY Past planning efforts in Cambridge such as K2C2 have recommended greater housing density to be developed around transportation nodes in Cambridge. Do you support this approach? <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Strongly support."</i>	BUILDING HEIGHTS Cambridge should allow taller buildings in certain areas if that height results in more affordable housing units. <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Strongly Agree."</i>	GROWTH More people wish to live in cities and Cambridge, as an attractive place to live, will see increasing demand for places for these people to live. Should Cambridge: • Address change by allowing more housing and increased height/density? • Seek to limit growth by maintaining its current restrictions on height/density? <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Allowing more housing and increased density"</i>	MARKET RATE HOUSING Increasing the supply of market rate housing will mitigate upward pressure on housing costs in Cambridge. <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Strongly Agree."</i>	AFFORDABLE HOUSING The affordable housing crisis in Cambridge should be addressed without private development and through the expenditure of public money alone. <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Strongly Disagree."</i>	MASTER PLAN Do you support moving forward on existing large development proposals or other opportunities that may arise (i.e., MIT Kendall Square redevelopment) during the Cambridge master planning process? <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Strongly Support."</i>	PARKING Should Cambridge reduce/eliminate minimum parking requirements in the zoning code for new developments in areas well served by transit, bike share, and other alternative transportation options? <i>Maximum points (2) for an answer of: "Yes."</i>	TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT Vehicle emissions in the United States are a major contributor towards global climate change. Building more mixed housing and commercial developments near transportation centers will help reduce car use in Cambridge. <i>Maximum points for an answer of: "Strongly Agree."</i>	CITY COUNCIL AUTHORITY Do you believe it is the appropriate role for the City Council to review specific development proposals/special permit requests – a power they do not currently have? <i>Maximum points for an answer of: "No."</i>	MASS + MAIN As a city councilor in the past City Council term, did you or would you have voted to support or oppose the final Mass & Main zoning proposal that included over 20% (50 units) of affordable housing? <i>Maximum points for answer of: "Yes."</i>	CANDIDATE VISION Please describe your vision for Cambridge's future in the areas addressed by ABC's organizational mission and goals. <i>Maximum points = 10</i>	CANDIDATE TOP 3 POLICIES Please name and describe three specific policies that the City Council can adopt to address the housing affordability crisis in Cambridge <i>Maximum points = 15</i>	TOTAL ABC RATING
Leland Cheung	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	10	15	45
Marc McGovern	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	10	13	41
David Maher	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	10	12	40
E. Denise Simmons	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	10	13	40
Dennis A. Benzan	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	5	14	37
Craig Kelley	1	1	2	1	1	2	-2	1	2	2	7	11	30
John Sanzone*	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	5	7	30
Tim Toomey	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	5	8	30
Mariko Davidson	2	2	2	-1	1	2	2	2	2	1	6	8	29
Gregg Moree	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	-2	2	0	0	16
Nadeem Mazen	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	-2	-2	1	5	13
Minka vanBeuzekom	0	1	0	1	2	-1	2	2	2	-2	2	3	12
Jan Devereux	0	1	1	-1	1	1	1	1	-2	-2	2	5	8
Romaine Wait	-1	-1	0	-1	1	-1	2	1	-2	-2	5	2	3
James Williamson	0	-1	-2	-1	2	1	2	0	-2	-2	0	5	2
Paul Mahoney	1	1	2	-1	2	-1	-2	1	-2	0	-	-	1
Mike Connolly	1	1	0	-1	1	-1	0	-1	-2	-2	1	0	-3
Kim Courtney	-1	1	-2	-1	1	-1	-2	-1	-2	-2	2	4	-4

Candidate Forums



Educational Forums



Cambridge Context



Cambridge Context: Opposition

CRUSH HOUR IN CAMBRIDGE

A Transportation Forum

Saturday, November 17, 4-6 PM • Senior Center, 806 Mass. Ave.



Over 18 million sq. ft. of new developments



Over 50,000 additional cars on Cambridge streets



Over 66,000 more commuter trips on buses & the T



Gridlock potential at many intersections



Sardine-packed subway cars during rush hour



Increased noise, congestion, exhaust fumes

Is this what we want? • What can we do? • Who will stand up for Cambridge?



Cambridge Context: We All Sound the Same

- Affordable Housing
- Diversity
- Livability
- Sustainable



It's all about showing up!



What You Can Do: Keep Working For Change

- Shift public policy & cultural norms towards smart growth, higher density
- Address gentrification; displacement of existing communities
- Even spread of economic benefits
- Impacts on public transit, infrastructure



For more information...

<http://abettercambridge.org>

<http://yimby.wiki>

tw: @ABetterCambMA

tw: @JesseKB

fb: ABetterCambridge