



**Smart Growth America**

Making Neighborhoods Great Together

## Infill 101

# Infill Development Strategies for Small Cities

Lessons from Billings, Montana

February 2, 2012

San Diego, California

# Smart Growth America . . .

. . . advocates for people who want to live and work in great neighborhoods. We believe smart growth solutions support businesses and jobs, provide more options for how people get around and make it more affordable to live near work and the grocery store. Our coalition works with communities to fight sprawl and save money. We are making America's neighborhoods great together.



Portland, OR

# Objectives of this session

- Define infill and understand its characteristics
- Know why infill is an important choice for communities
- Identify the players and their roles
- Know where infill may be appropriate
- Identify the issues with infill



Portland, OR

# Definition of infill



Portland, OR

# Florida

## Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act

“Urban infill” means the development of vacant parcels in otherwise built-up areas where public facilities such as sewer systems, roads, schools, and recreation areas are already in place and the average residential density is at least five dwelling units per acre, the average nonresidential intensity is at least a floor area ratio of 1.0 and vacant, developable land does not constitute more than 10 percent of the area.



Pasadena, CA

# Maryland

## Models and Guidelines for Infill Development

INFILL: The development of vacant, abandoned, passed over or underutilized land within built-up areas of existing communities, where infrastructure is already in place.



Portland, OR

# Oregon

## The Infill and Redevelopment Code Handbook

in•fill \ 'in-fill\ n: development of vacant or remnant lands passed over by previous development in urban areas.



Pasadena, CA

# Characteristics of infill

- Urban
- Vacant, abandoned, passed over, or underutilized land
- Infrastructure in place



Portland, OR



# Infill



# Also infill



Missoula, MT

# Also infill



Portland, OR

# Also infill



Lake Oswego, OR

# Also infill



Pasadena, CA

# Not infill



St. Louis exurbs

# Not infill



Bozeman, MT

# Why is infill an important choice for communities?



Boston, MA



# Lifespan of buildings

- Retail < 25 years
- Office < 75 years
- Warehouse < 50 years
- Education < 75 years
- Non-residential < 50 years
- Residential 150 years +

*Source: Arthur C. Nelson, Presidential Professor & Director of Metropolitan Research, University of Utah, based on DoE Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey.*

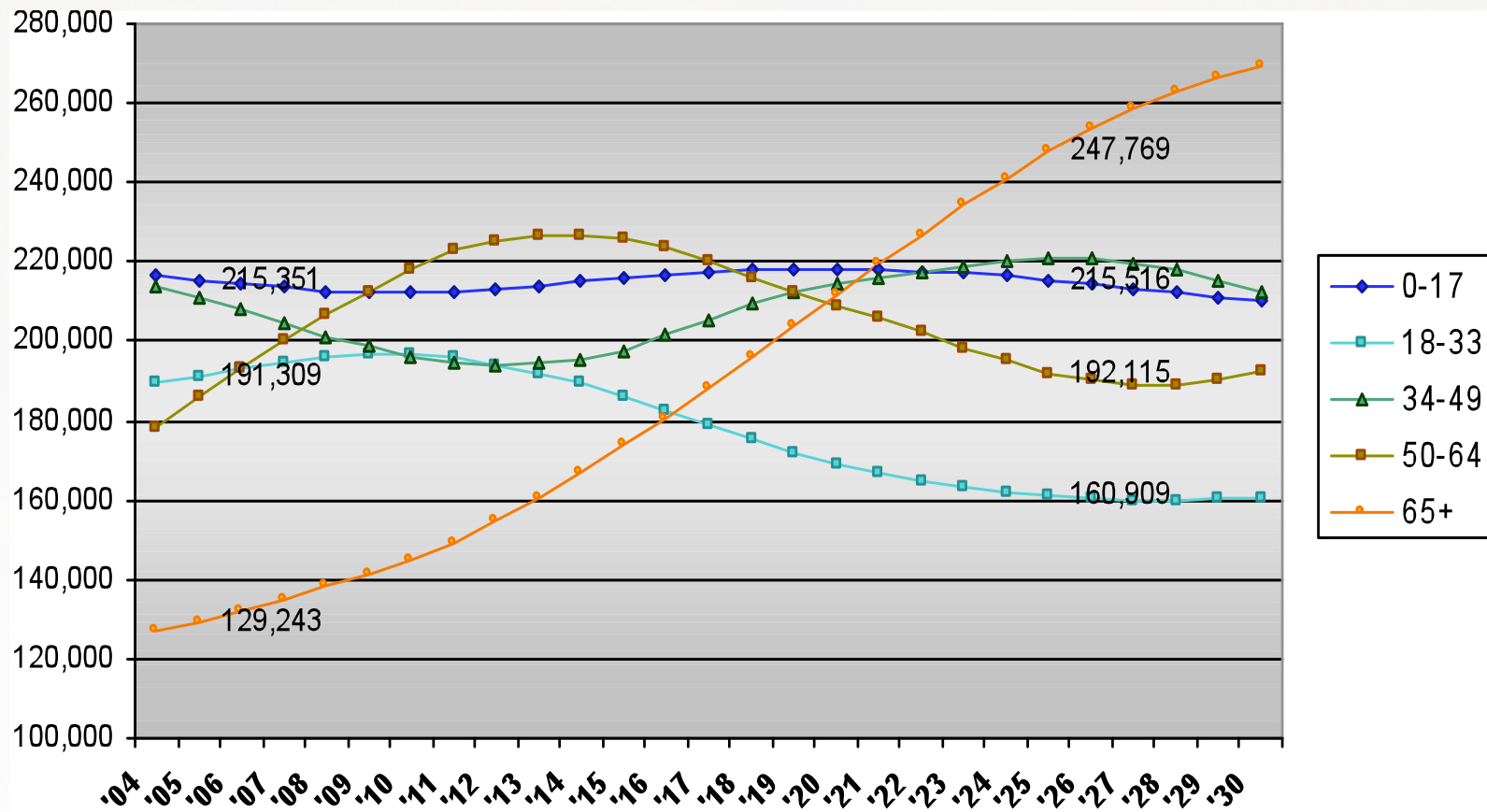
# Rise in single-person households

## National Trend

Household	1960	2000	2025
With children	48%	33	28
Without children	52	67	72
Single	13	26	28

Nelson, Arthur "Where Will Everybody Live?" EPA White Paper, Virginia Tech 2007

# The “silver tsunami”

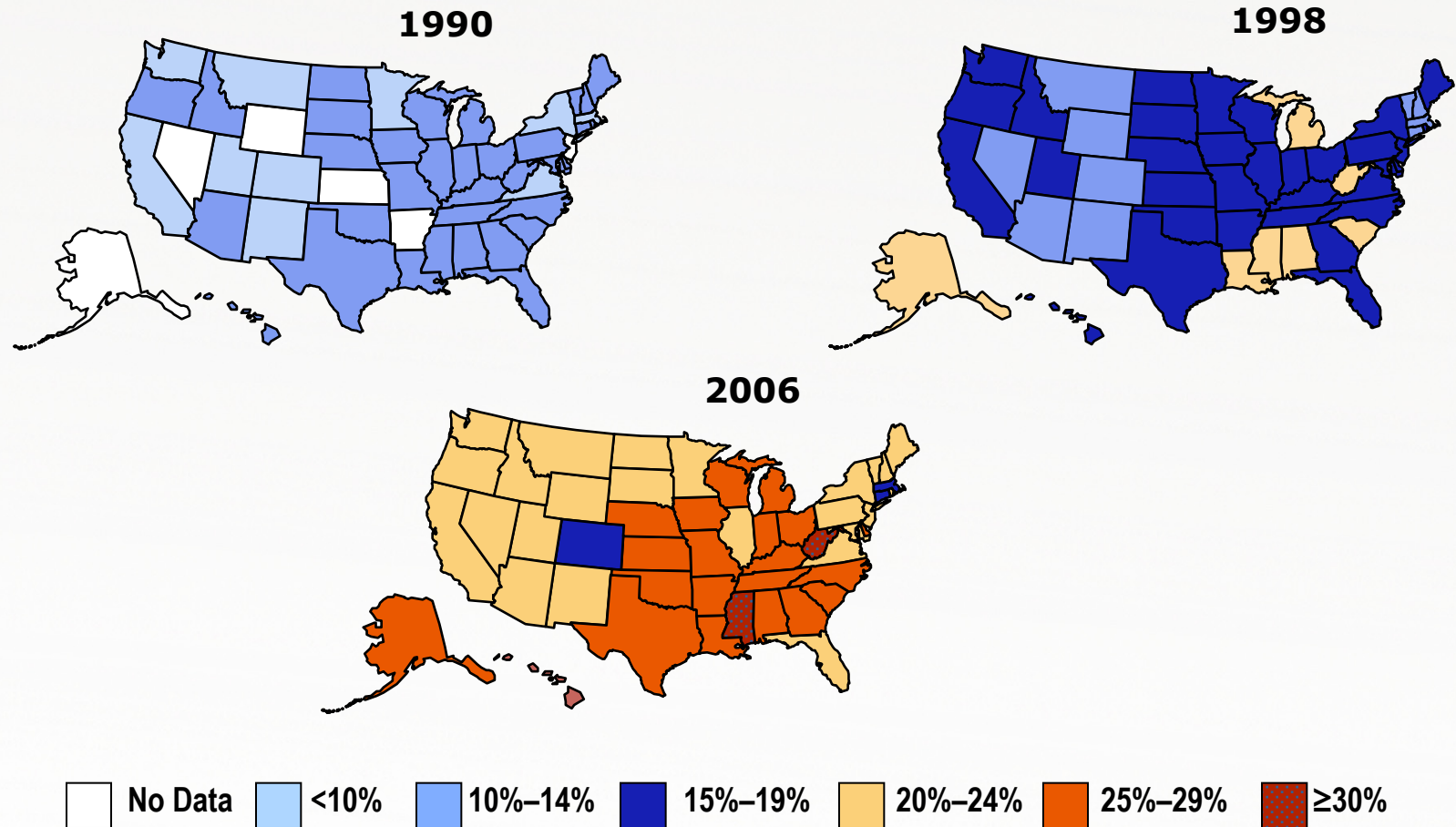


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005

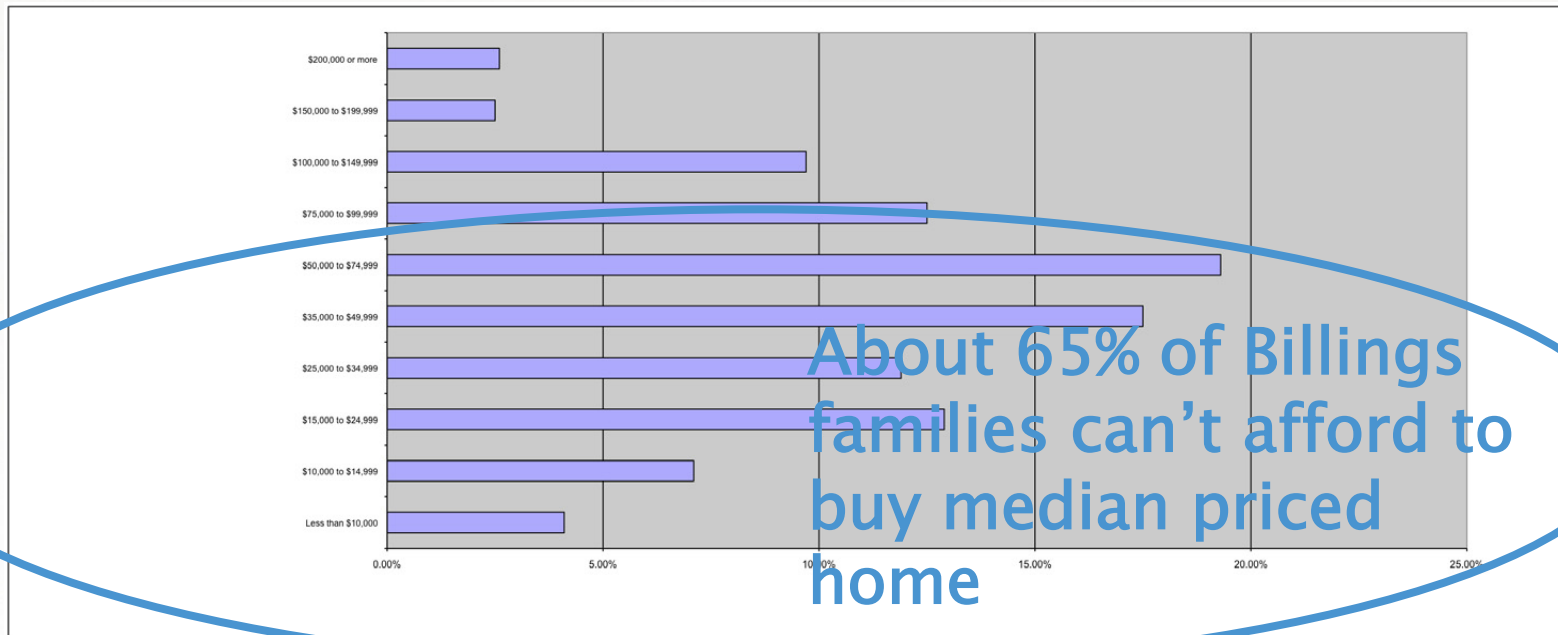
Graph courtesy of Dr. Larry Swanson, O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West, U. of Montana

# Obesity Trends\* Among US Adults

(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or about 30 lbs. overweight for 5'4" person)



# Housing affordability



About 65% of Billings families can't afford to buy median priced home

2009 American Community Survey

# Share of growth 2010-2030

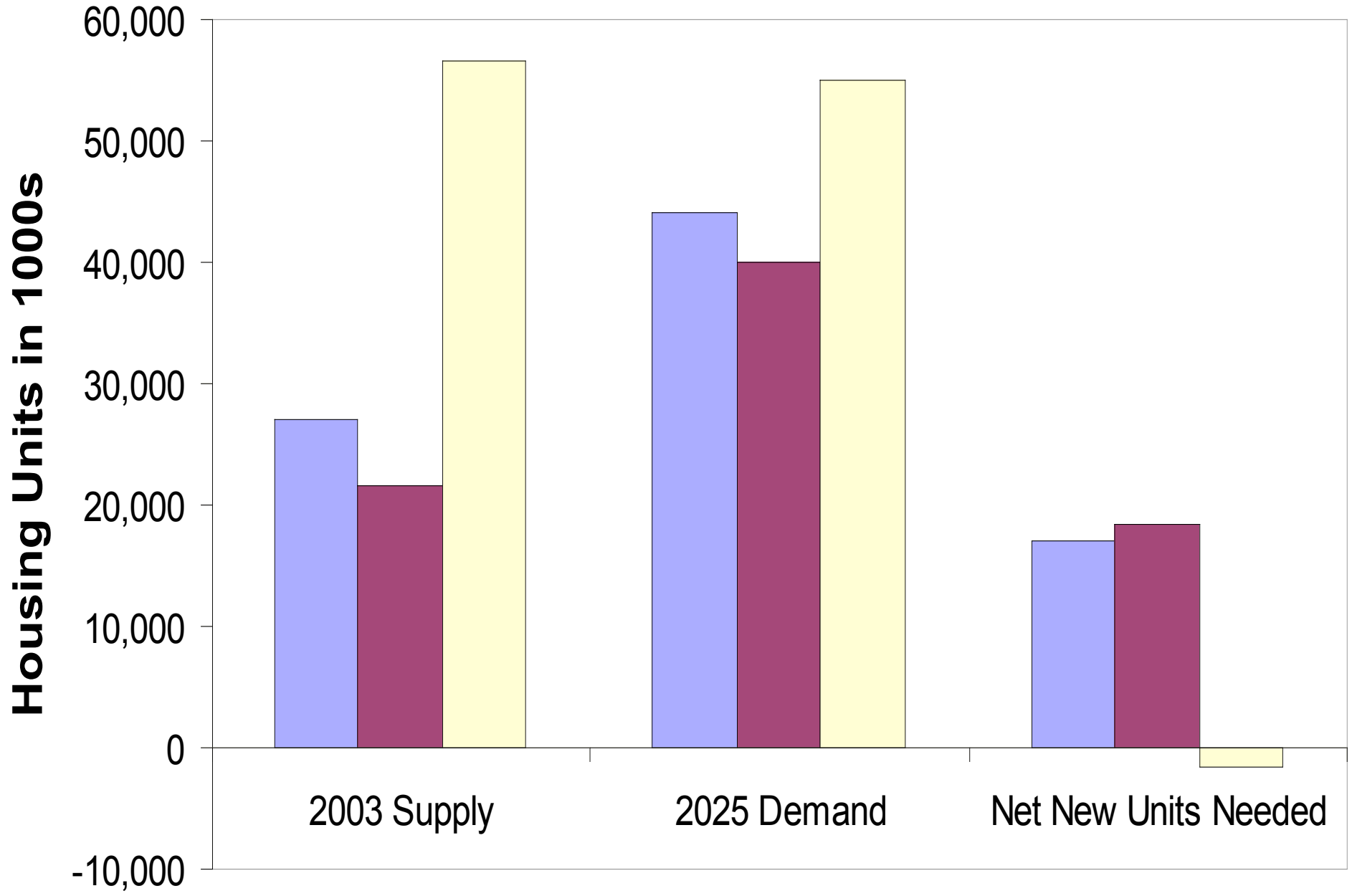
- Households with children - 14%
- Households w/o children - 86%
  - Singles/other – 32%



Bozeman, MT

Source: Arthur C. Nelson, Presidential Professor & Director, Metropolitan Research Center, University of Utah

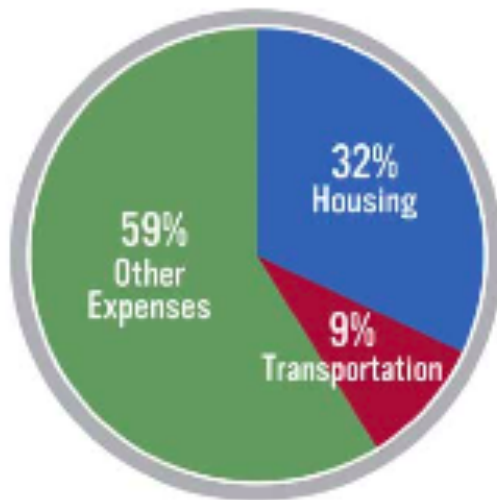
Attached Small Lot Large Lot



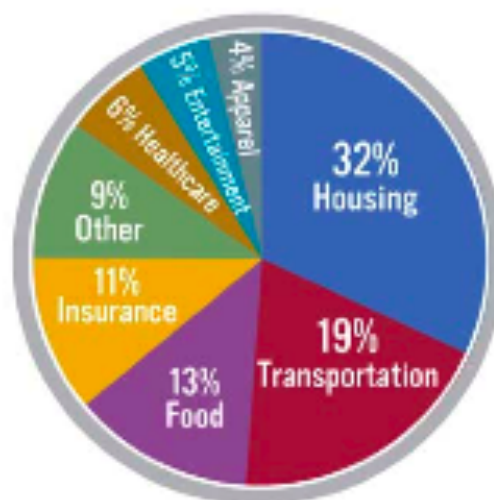
# Transportation and a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy

## Cost of Current System for Users

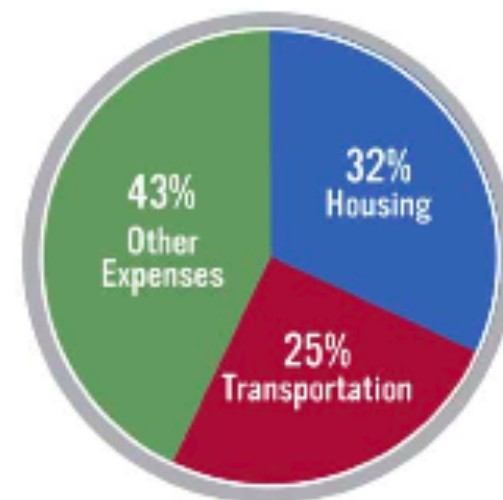
### TRANSIT RICH NEIGHBORHOOD



### AVERAGE AMERICAN FAMILY



### AUTO DEPENDENT EXURBS



While the average family spends 19 percent of the household budget on transportation, and households in auto-dependent neighborhoods spend 25 percent, households with good access to transit spend just 9 percent. This savings can be critical for low-income households.

Source: Center for TOD + Transportation Affordability Index, 2004 Bureau of Labor Statistics



# Who is involved?

- Government
- Civic organizations
- Developers
- Lenders
- Designers
- Builders
- Neighborhoods
- Citizens



Portland, OR

# The Role of Elected Officials

- Change the regulatory climate
  - Update our zoning/land use regulations
- Change the economic climate
  - Density bonuses
  - Tax deferrals and reductions
  - Fee waivers
  - Setting aside or buying down the cost of land
- Change the dialogue
  - Educate citizens – infill brings new amenities, new jobs, new tax revenues, new retail
- Change the political climate
  - Build citizen support for infill by creating a community-based vision for growth
  - Assure citizens you will insist on quality

# The Role of Business Leaders

- **Attend planning meetings** to support good projects
- **Advocate** for zoning law changes that allow for higher density and mixed uses
- **Locate** businesses near public transportation and existing infrastructure
- **Encourage employees** to actively support proposals for higher-density housing near jobs and transportation

# The Role of Citizens

- **Get educated** about the importance of infill development and spread the word.
- **Get involved** early in comprehensive community planning.
  - Urge local leaders to create a community-based vision for future growth
- **Attend planning meetings** and insist on:
  - Quality design that fits in with the community
  - Track record of success
  - Integrated with the transportation system

# Where do you infill?

- Areas of stability
- Areas of change



South Pasadena, CA

# Issues to consider

- Is there demand?
- Does your community have the capacity?
- How do you make it easy to happen where you want it to happen?
- How do you make it less easy where you don't want it?

# Infill policy and guidance

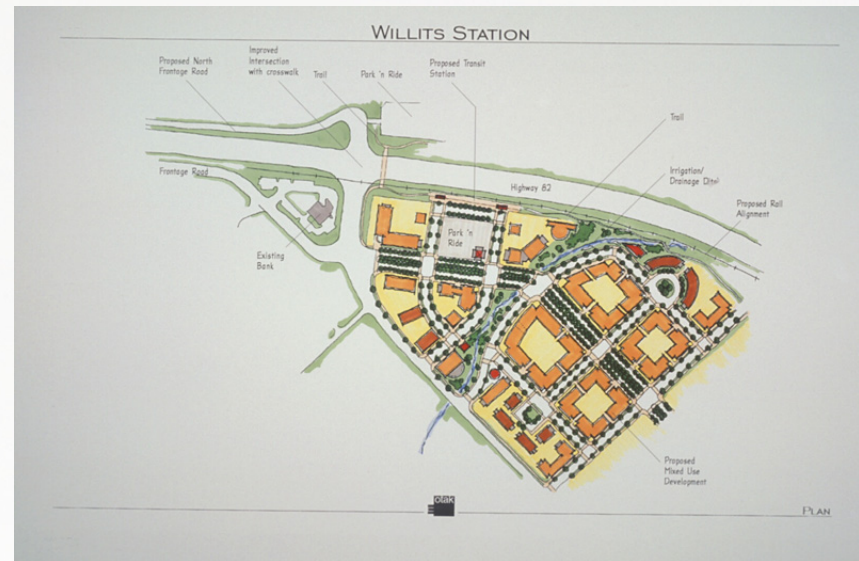
- Location
- Mix of uses
- Density
- Design quality
- Income mix



Glenwood Springs, CO

# Regulation

- Zoning
- Design standards
- Building code

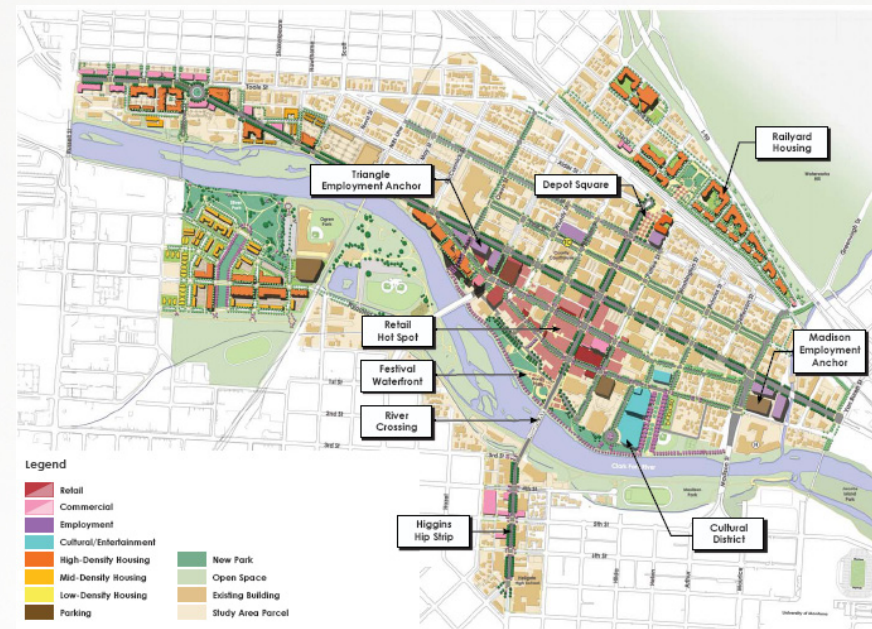


Basalt, CO



# Incentives

- Regional and area planning
- Special districts
- Density bonuses
- Expedited permitting
- Fee waivers
- Direct investment



Missoula, MT

# Session review

- Define infill and understand its characteristics
- Know why infill is an important choice for communities
- Identify the players and their roles
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# Questions?

We have the freedom to make informed, humane, and intelligent choices about the kind of world we want to leave for our children and grandchildren. We also have the freedom to make uninformed, selfish, and stupid choices. Which will it be? - Greg Pahl

