

CHAPTER 5

METRO AND EDGE CITY GROWTH

Woe to them that join house to house.
Woe to them . . . that lay field to field, till there be no place . . .
—ISAIAH 5:8

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INTRODUCTION

The United States is undergoing profound urban changes. In this chapter, three major transformations are emphasized:

The first is the metropolitan area (and beyond) replacing the city as the major urban unit. Eighty-three percent of the population now lives in metropolitan areas. The 2010 census showed nine-tenths of all U.S. growth occurring in metropolitan areas. The one hundred largest metro areas occupy only 12 percent of the nation's land area, but house two-thirds of the population and generate 75 percent of the national GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Metropolitan growth slowed considerably during the 2007–2012 economic recession and housing bust. Central cities and inner suburbs fared best in maintain modest growth rates, while previously booming outer suburban and exurban areas experienced declines. Outer areas of Denver, Atlanta, Miami, and Las Vegas showed the greatest growth slowdown.¹ The metro areas whose economies did the worst were those that previously had experienced huge house price increases (e.g., Phoenix, Miami, and Las Vegas).² Today these metro areas are showing increasing economic and population revival.

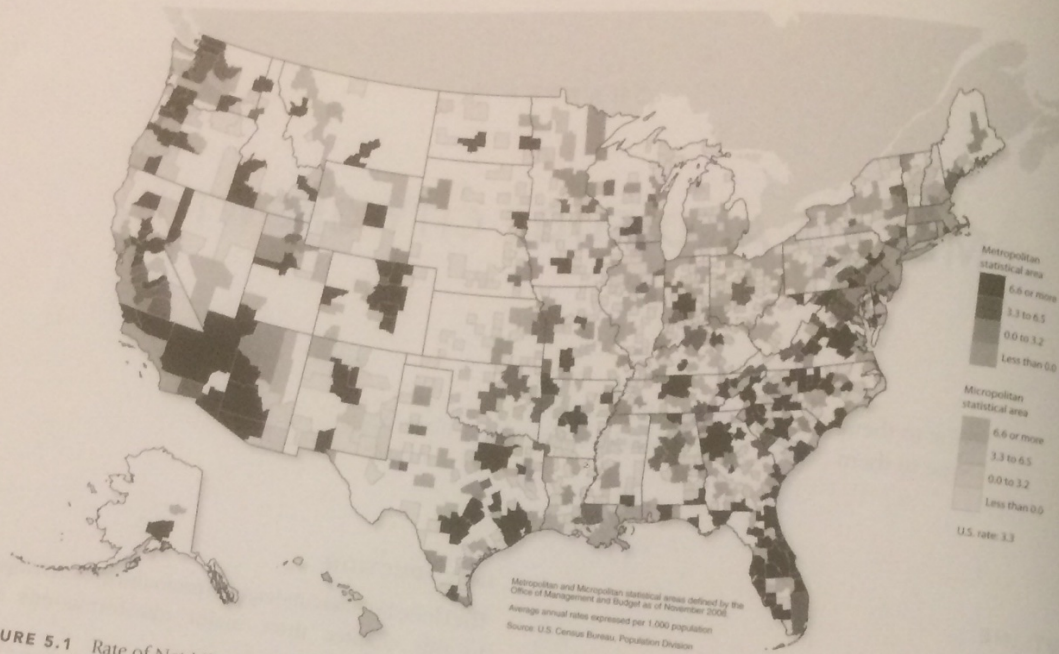


FIGURE 5.1 Rate of Net Migration by Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas, 2000 to 2010
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2010 Population Estimates

The second long-term change is the increasing economic dominance of metropolitan edge cities. Over four-fifths of the nation's office space is now in suburbia or beyond, much of it in outlying office parks along the interstates. While it twists the language, edge cities are now the center of most urban area economic activity. Even when metropolitan growth tapers, edge cities still hold "the edge."

The third change is the four-decades-long population and industry shift from the Snowbelt toward the Sunbelt and the nation's east and west coastlines (see Figure 5.2). The move toward warmer climates has slowed recently, but metro areas in the South and West still are growing faster than other areas. Urban sprawl, which is the product of these changes, will receive major treatment in Chapter 12: Housing Patterns, Sprawl, and Smart Growth.

METROPOLITAN GROWTH

Let us begin by looking at the metropolitan areas where over four out of five Americans lived as of 2013. Metropolitan areas now house over 250 million of the nation's 315 million population. Over half of all Americans live in the fifty-one largest "metropolitan statistical areas" having a population of 1 million or more. And the nine largest metropolitan areas, each with a population of more than 5 million, now hold almost a third of U.S. residents. New Jersey is entirely covered by metropolitan areas, while in seven other states—California, Maryland, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Florida, Massachusetts, and New York—over 90 percent of the population lives in metropolitan areas. In Idaho, at the other extreme, only 20 percent of the population lives in metropolitan areas.

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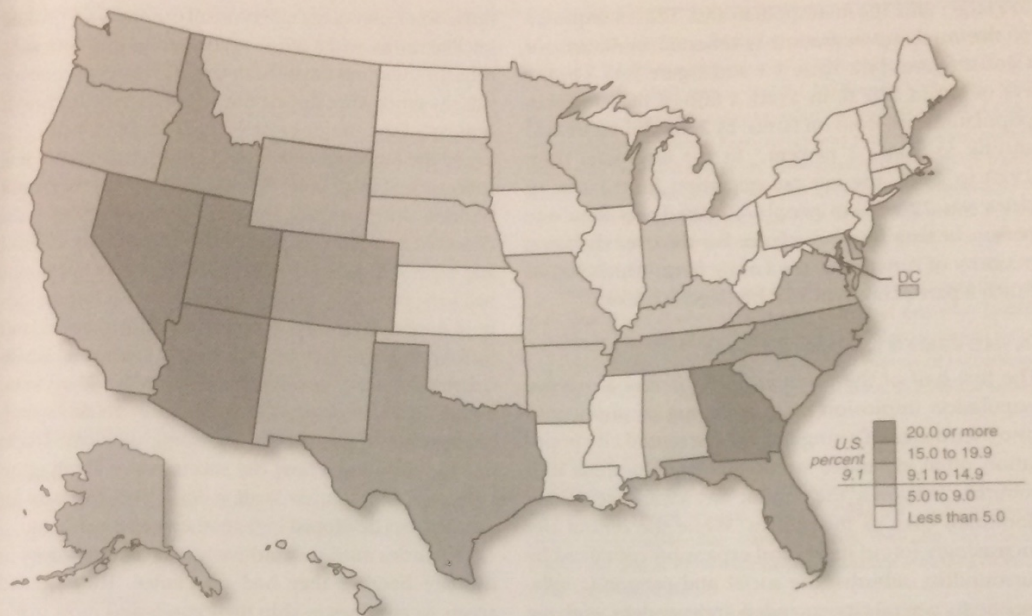


FIGURE 5.2 Percent Change in Population, 2000 to 2010
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2010 Population Estimates

The twentieth century was a period of dramatic metropolitan growth and ascendancy. The era of the frontier was closed, and it was clear that future national growth would have a metropolitan nexus. People were moving off the farms and out of the small towns into the cities. Rural counties were being depopulated, while population in the central cities was rapidly increasing.

The pattern was one of population growth concentrating in ever-larger metropolitan areas. The census of 1910 recognized this centripetal (inward) population movement by establishing forty-four ad hoc "metropolitan districts" whose boundaries extended beyond those of the central city. A century ago, roughly one-third of the nation's population already resided in these newly defined metropolitan areas.

If changes in the definition of metropolitan areas are taken into account, virtually all the population growth

during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries occurred in metropolitan areas. Exceptions were a brief revival of non-metropolitan growth during the 1970s and some rural rebound during the 1990s. The non-metro population is technically defined as living outside of metropolitan areas. It does not represent a return to farming or older rural ways of life. Rather, many of the new non-metropolitan residents live rural but are employed metropolitan. Others are retired and live in retirement-oriented communities within commuting distance of the city. All these are part of an exurbia sprawl that extends metropolitan influence to virtually the entire population.

Metropolitan dominance had been foreseen by scholars as far back as the 1920s in the pioneering works of perceptive writers such as Gras and McKenzie.³ They foresaw that the city per se was yielding its influence

GROWTH

Looking at the metropolitan areas of five Americans lived as of 2013. Now house over 250 million of population. Over half of all one largest "metropolitan" of 1 million or more metropolitan areas, each million, now hold Jersey is entirely in seven other Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York—over 90 percent metropolitan areas. In 20 percent of the areas.

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to a larger unit: the metropolitan area. The consequence of the rural out-migration is reflected in Bureau of Census figures (see Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1). On the eve of World War II, in 1940, a fifth of the American population still lived on farms; by 2000 this figure had shrunk to under 2 percent.⁴ In the fifty years from 1920 to 1970, the net out-migration from farms to cities was 29 million people.⁵ Today, fewer than one person in sixty lives on a farm. For the overwhelming majority of Americans, the family farm, which was so much a part of our national heritage, is history.

IN-MOVEMENT: 1900 TO 1950

The first half of the twentieth century saw a massive population implosion or in-gathering of population into metro areas. During this era the central city population often expanded beyond its legal bounds into suburbs. However, the central city clearly remained dominant over its metro area. While the central city increasingly found its physical expansion contained by surrounding suburbs, the social and economic influence of the central city expanded. Independent, outlying towns, villages, and crossroad markets found themselves engulfed in an urban network. The local bank became a branch of a large city bank; local papers were replaced by metropolitan dailies; and local businesses went under, unable to compete with metropolitan-based

firms. Some previously independent communities became satellite towns, while others specialized as bedroom suburbs for those who worked in the city. The consequence was the emergence during the first half of the twentieth century of the city-dominated metropolitan unit.

In the American city prior to the 1960s, industry was concentrated in an inner belt located between the central business district (CBD) and the better residential areas. However, central city factory expansion was both difficult and expensive. Assembly lines or other factory operations had to be fitted into existing buildings, and moving goods from floor to floor was a serious problem. Moreover, land surrounding the factory was already occupied, which meant that whatever was already on the land had to be bought and torn down before the factory could expand. Transportation also was an increasing problem. Trucks had to move down busy city streets before lining up to wait to get into too few loading docks. Parking space for workers' cars developed into another major headache.

Factories until the mid-twentieth century stayed in the city because they had no choice. They needed access to rail lines to ship their goods and most workers did not have private cars, but rather came to work on public transportation. Similarly, until the 1970s, downtown was where the major department stores and retail outlets were located. For major shopping one went downtown, usually by public transit.

TABLE 5.1 THE TOP TEN METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS OF 2012

Metropolitan Statistical Area	2012 Population Estimate	2012 Ranking	2000 Ranking
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	19,831,858	1	1
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	13,052,921	2	2
Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI	9,522,434	3	3
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	6,700,991	4	5
Houston-Woodlands-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	6,177,035	5	8
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	6,018,800	6	4
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	5,860,342	7	7
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach	5,762,717	8	6
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell	5,457,831	9	11
Boston-Cambridge-Newton	4,640,802	10	10

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2013.

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Critical concepts:

cinematic- is term to highlighting the historical argument celebrate other arts as the triumph of science, music and poetry. And a viewer within the narrative

category- refers to a literary device that symbolize greater abstract as national or spiritual allegory

magical realism- is according to a style that bridges the gap between the real and the magical. Realism can be

BOX 5.1 DEFINING METROPOLITAN AREAS

The Census Bureau has a number of ways of defining different-size metropolitan areas. Traditionally, the federal government has defined metropolitan areas in two ways: as urbanized areas and as metropolitan statistical areas. The building unit of urbanized areas is population density, while the building blocks of metropolitan areas are counties. The 2010 census essentially used this system, and census-based data released since the census uses this format. In 2003 the system for defining metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) was redefined to reflect the decentralization of employment and population within metro areas.* A new concept of micropolitan statistical areas (MicroSAs) was also introduced. The result has been some confusion among researchers and policy makers. There is no need to foist this confusion on students. Thus, both to minimize confusion and to allow for historical comparisons, we will use the general term metro area.

Urban

The U.S. Census Bureau defines as "urban" all census block groups or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 persons per square mile.

Urbanized Areas

According to the Census Bureau definition, an urbanized area consists of a central city, or cities, of 50,000 or more and the surrounding closely settled territory, whether incorporated or unincorporated. The term, thus, refers to the actual urban population of an area regardless of political boundaries such as county or state lines. The 2000 census also created a new category of areas over 10,000 but under 50,000, which it calls *urban clusters*. All residing in the urbanized area are considered urban, but the population is also divided into those in the "central city" and those in the remainder of the area, or "urban fringe." The proportion of a state's population living in urbanized areas at the last census varied from 85 percent in New Jersey to 15 percent in Vermont. As of the 2010 census there were 486 urbanized areas holding 71 percent of the national population.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas

Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) are what are most commonly referred to when speaking of metro areas. They are officially designated by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. A "metropolitan statistical area" is a county or group of counties having at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties. In New England, where there are no counties, MSAs consist of townships

and cities instead. Since 2003, MSAs with a single core city having at least 2.5 million are designated "metropolitan divisions."

As of the 2010 census the 381 MSA areas in the U.S. held 85 percent of the national population. Some fifty-one MSAs had over a million residents. New Jersey was the most metropolitan state with 100 percent of its state population living in metro areas. Arizona was second with 88 percent, and Nevada third with 86 percent. (Non-urban space in both these states is very much open.) MSAs are the most commonly used measure to define metro areas.

Newly defined smaller *micropolitan statistical areas* have at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by community ties. The 577 micropolitan statistical areas in 2005 contained 10 percent of the total population.

Combined Statistical Areas

In 2003 a new set of census areas called "Combined Statistical Areas" (CSAs) were created. Basically, CSAs are combinations of two or more metropolitan statistical areas. They also can include a MSA and one or more micropolitan statistical areas. As of 2012 there were 166 CSAs.

All these variously defined metropolitan areas can cross state lines. The New York CSA, for example, includes portions of New Jersey and Connecticut. The Philadelphia CSA includes, in addition to the section in Pennsylvania, portions of Maryland, Delaware, and northeast New Jersey.

Canada

Canada's definitions are a bit different. In Canada an "urban area" is any area that has more than 400 persons per square kilometer and has 1,000 people. As of Canada's 2011 census Canada had thirty-three large metropolitan areas called census metropolitan areas (CMAs). Each CMA in Canada has a total population of at least 100,000, including an urban core with a population of at least 50,000.[†] CMAs usually consist of many smaller municipalities.

*For a discussion of the U.S. definitions, see: William H. Frey, Jill H. Wilson, Alan Berube, and Audrey Singer, "Tracking American Trends into the Twenty-First Century: A Field Guide to the New Metropolitan and Micropolitan Definitions," in Alan Berube, Bruce Katz, and Robert E. Lang, eds., *Redefining Urban & Suburban America*, Vol. III, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2006), pp. 191-234.

[†]"Portrait of the Canadian Population in 2012: Subprovincial Population Dynamics," Statistics Canada, www2.statcan.ca/english/census11/analysis

2000 Ranking

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OUT-MOVEMENT: 1950 INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Today, the geography of work and shopping have been turned upside down. Most shopping, service establishments, and manufacturing firms now have suburban addresses. Decentralization of people, shopping, offices, and manufacturing has been the pattern since the last half of the twentieth century. Not since the 1970s have downtowns accounted for over half the nation's sales. Today downtowns average less than 10 percent of metro area employment.⁶

Suburban shopping malls—only a handful existed fifty years ago—now number about 50,000 and dominate retail sales. With over three-quarters of employed suburbanites working in suburbs, old commutation patterns (residents of suburbs commuting to the central city) have also broken down. Since 1980 the average commute has not been from suburb to city but from suburb to suburb. Downtown is no longer the major metropolitan employment site. Today, 90 percent of metro area office space is not downtown, but suburban. Many of the offices are in suburban office parks.

The last half of the twentieth century saw a massive flow of urban business, manufacturing, housing, and retail trade from the center toward the periphery, a pattern that continued until the 2008 recession. Actually, for a century, with annexation taken into account, the population of outer "suburban" areas has grown faster than that of central cities.⁷ (However, the 2010 census and later census data indicates this may be changing toward more city and inner suburban growth.) With almost all metropolitan growth during the last century taking place in the suburban ring beyond the central city, roughly two-thirds of the metropolitan area population now lives in the suburbs. (This suburban decentralization is further treated in Chapter 6, *The Suburban Era*.) Growth in non-metropolitan areas has been highest in those non-metropolitan areas having metropolitan characteristics and/or experiencing overspill from metropolitan counties. The exurbia areas of overspill or sprawl, particularly those along interstates, simply confirm the patterns of metropolitan dominance.

COMMUTING AND COMMUNICATION

Without technological breakthroughs in electrification, transportation, and communication the twentieth century outward flow of urban population wouldn't have been possible. The nineteenth-century city was based on steam power, which could only be transported short distances. The cities of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are based on electricity and petroleum. Massive use of electric power, automobiles, trucks, telephones, Internet, smartphones, and iPads dramatically increased the movement of persons, goods, and ideas.

Research shows that the factor most closely related to a city's growth during the first half of the twentieth century was the extent of its transportation network with other cities.⁸ The auto was critical to urban growth. The automobile provided mobility to the average urban dweller and encouraged rapid settlement of previously inaccessible areas on the periphery of the central city. Henry Ford's Model T changed, not just the way we move, but the way we live. The automobile went from being a toy of the rich to a middle-class necessity. Automobile registration in the United States increased from 2.5 million in 1915 to 9 million in 1920 and 26 million in 1930. Following World War II, auto ownership became common in working-class as well as middle-class families. In 2012 there were 243 million motor vehicles registered in the United States. The auto now dominates American life. Roughly one-third of all city land is devoted to the movement or the storage of vehicles. Roads, garages, car dealerships, parking lots, and truck facilities define urban areas.

As of 1920 a Chicago study indicated that the average distance from home to workplace was only 1.5 miles.⁹ With the coming of the automobile, the maximum distance that workers could live from their place of employment and commute within an hour increased from a dozen miles to perhaps 25 miles or so. (Theoretically, the automobile more than doubled the commuting radius, but the practical realities of poor roads and traffic congestion set lower limits.) However, far more important today than the actual distance from work is the commuting time. Today the average one-way commute is about 24 minutes; the longest average commute time of 39 minutes is endured by New Yorkers.

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According to the Census Bureau, New Yorkers spend 6.7 days a year commuting to work.¹⁰ (See Figure 12.1.)

What the automobile did for people, the truck did for goods. Prior to the 1920s there really was no alternative to the railroad for moving intercity goods. There was no road system beyond city limits. Following World War I the Army sent a convoy of trucks coast to coast to demonstrate the need for national roads. It took the Army convoy sixty-two difficult days to cross the country. Leading the 1919 Washington to San Francisco convoy was Lt. Colonel Dwight Eisenhower. (Later, when he became President, Eisenhower signed the bill creating the interstate system, which now bears his name.)

Rail lines were built from city to city, but roads go everywhere. Trucks are free of fixed routes and fixed schedules, need no elaborate fixed terminal facilities, and can make door-to-door pickups and deliveries. No longer is it necessary for the factory to be on the rail line. The major advantage of motor transport is its lower cost per mile for short hauls within a day or two of the city. In train transport, on the other hand, the lowest cost per mile is for the longest trips. The motor truck advantage was increased considerably by the construction of new public roads. Railroads, by contrast, pay for their own construction and maintenance. The interstate expressway system, begun during the late 1950s, dramatically extended the trucks' advantage. Today, virtually all short-haul goods are shipped by truck, while goods that are needed overnight are increasingly shipped by air. However, with fuel costs high the piggybacking semi-trailers by rail is now common.

What the motor vehicle did for transportation, the telephone did for communication. Today when smartphones and iPads are commonplace, it is useful to remember that not until 1920 did over half of all homes have telephones. And until twenty years ago long-distance phoning was quite expensive.

Today technology goes anywhere and geographical isolation no longer means isolation from mainstream technology. There is more than a touch of truth in the joke that the West Virginia state flower is the satellite dish. Businesses and offices no longer have to be in central-city locations in order to have adequate communication availability. During recent decades, widespread use of

air-delivery services such as FedEx, and the universal use of computers for data transfer, have weakened the need for a central-city business location. E-mail, smartphones, and the Internet, mean a central location is no longer a business requirement. Once physically inaccessible locations now have addresses on the information superhighway.

CANADIAN URBAN REGIONS

Canada is now 80 percent urban, and four major Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) now hold half of Canada's population. The 2011 Census showed that over half of Canadians live in southern Ontario's so-called Golden Horseshoe around Toronto, Montreal and environs, the Vancouver area on the West Coast, and the Calgary-to-Edmonton corridor in Alberta.¹¹ These four areas, holding over 17 million people, are growing far faster than the country as a whole. (These areas showed a five year jump of 7.6 percent as compared to 0.5 for the rest of the country.)

These four urban regions are magnets for people, jobs, and services. They are also more ethnically diverse than the rest of Canada. Demographically, the four major metro areas look more like each other than like the rest of the country. Immigrants, who make up the main source of Canada's growth, flow mainly into the major metropolitan areas. This is especially true of Toronto, which boasts that 45 percent of its population are immigrants from another country. This makes Toronto more diverse than New York City. In North America only Miami, with its large number of Cuban and other Latin newcomers, has a higher proportion of immigrants than Toronto.

POST-INDUSTRIAL CENTRAL CITIES

The changes noted above have radically altered the relationship between central cities and their suburbs. Cities no longer dominate in population, services, or employment. In the U.S., the overall population of central cities remains about the same, but the overall data masks real changes. Losses in northern and eastern cities have been offset by growth and annexations in newer

southern and western Sunbelt cities. Suburbs, on the other hand, continue to grow. There are now over three suburbanites for every two central-city residents. The once dominant cities have lost most of their blue-collar manufacturing jobs. For example, Pittsburgh, long known as the Steel City, hasn't had steel mills for decades. It is now an education, medical, and technology based city. Cities have lost well-paying union jobs as well as entry-level jobs through which poorer residents traditionally entered the labor market. This is not a recent change. Thirty years ago there already were almost twice as many persons employed in manufacturing in the suburbs as in cities.

Decentralization to fringe locations has been somewhat selective. Operations that require large plants and large amounts of ground space per worker are drawn toward the periphery. Obsolete central-city plants cannot compete economically with new, custom-designed single-story facilities. Intel, for instance, builds its factories around the product. Automobile plants, chemical firms, and steel mills require large areas of fringe land for their newer operations. The American auto plants of the last decades have been built not in Detroit but in rural Tennessee, South Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi. A decade back Nissan opened its largest U.S. plant in Clinton, Mississippi.

Generally, production and distribution have decentralized as markets have decentralized. Wholesaling has decentralized as well, since wholesaling and warehousing require large spaces. The use of trucks and air rather than railroads for transportation also means more flexible outer locations become possible. By locating businesses outside the congested city core, and near the interstate expressways and airports, businesses reduce transportation costs. Rapid transportation provides a form of storage en route.

On the other hand, the city still has some advantages. Finance, advertising, legal services, management, educational institutions, and government generally have shown less inclination to decentralize. While manufacturing, retail trade, and wholesaling typically have large space-per-employee requirements, most managerial, clerical, professional, and business functions are highly space-intensive. City offices can pack white-collar workers in cubicles, and then efficiently stack them floor upon floor, in high-rise office buildings.

Central cities are far from dead. In fact, between 2010 and 2012 America's biggest cities overall actually grew slightly faster than their suburbs.¹² While downtowns have clearly lost much of their retailing function, CBDs have been experiencing new business construction. The last two decades have witnessed a downtown office building boom in cities such as New York, Chicago, Phoenix, Atlanta, Houston, and Seattle. Boston, for example, has undergone a renaissance, moving from being a casualty of the manufacturing shutdown of the 1970s to becoming a model today of high-tech and service industries.¹³ Meanwhile, twenty-first-century Chicago before the recession had its biggest building boom since the 1920s.

Management, finance, government, and law still remain at the center of the city because they do not require great amounts of space per worker and they need access to one another; a downtown location makes far more sense when services are oriented not to individuals but to other organizations. In the CBD, communications are easy and informal—business may be conducted over lunch, for example—and there are many services and economies available outside the firm itself. Outside specialists are readily accessible to cover areas such as advertising, legal services, accounting, tax information, and mailing.

Firms located on the periphery must provide all sorts of services often not required of those in the center, such as parking lots, cafeterias, and medical services. Top management may also remain in the city so that it does not become isolated from the informal information networks regarding competitors, government policy, and buying patterns that are always found when a number of firms in the same sort of business are located in the same area. Even in an era of Twitter and computer-based information systems, face-to-face contact remains important.

Downtowns also have become major entertainment, tourist, and convention sites. New downtown hotels and convention centers are common to both midsized and large traditional tourist cities. Since the 1990s downtowns have again become fun places to be. As cities have dropped their crime rates their tourist business has soared. From 1970 to 1990 alone, the thirty-eight largest urban areas added more than three hundred downtown hotels, and more than a hundred cities have built convention centers.¹⁴ In New York's Lower

Manhattan, for example, a 92-acre business, hotel, and entertainment complex named Battery Park City was constructed at the cost of \$1.5 billion. Even Harlem, which for years suffered disinvestment, is now showing major commercial investment in large retail businesses. Former president Clinton has his offices in Harlem. (See Chapter 11, *Cities and Change*, for more on gentrification in Harlem).

Overall, however, the growth of urban-office white-collar employment has not been able to compensate fully for major blue-collar and retail trade losses. And the Great Recession further devastated blue-collar jobs. Today some cities remain in financial distress, while other American cities are in reasonable or good financial condition (See Box 7.2, *Brain-Gain Cities*).¹⁵

Newer post-automobile cities are far more “suburban” and spread out than older pre-automobile cities.¹⁶ Research indicates that older metropolitan areas have seen sharp decreases in density in their central cores, whereas newer post-World War II cities never had high-density apartment neighborhoods in their central cities.¹⁷ The result is a national pattern of moderate- to low-level density throughout metropolitan areas—in effect, the suburbanization of the central cities. This pattern of sprawling “suburban-like” cities is most evident in the newer cities of the South, Southwest, and West.

EDGE CITIES

The twenty-first-century pattern is one of edge cities. The term *edge cities* was coined by Garreau in 1991 to describe the pattern of evolving new multiple urban cores increasingly found in the outer rings of metropolitan areas.¹⁸ Edge cities can be viewed as an extension of the multiple-nuclei model of urban growth. Currently North America has approaching three hundred edge cities, usually anchored by a mall or malls. While the boundaries of edge cities are often imprecisely defined, edge cities do have certain common characteristics.¹⁹ Edge cities generally are located well beyond the old downtowns, and usually they are found at the intersection of two major highways, one often being an interstate. In size they are much larger than any single mall, and while they may include limited housing (sometimes in gated communities), edge cities are predominantly retail and business centers. Edge cities

commonly have more retail stores than found in old downtowns and, unlike downtown, are usually totally automobile dependent. According to Garreau’s criteria, edge cities have to have at least 5 million square feet of leasable office space and at least 600,000 square feet of retail space (about the size of a large mall with three anchor stores and eighty to one hundred smaller shops).

Edge cities are the culmination of three major suburban changes that have taken place in metro areas over the last fifty years. These changes represent three overlapping waves of out-movement from the central city. The first out-movement, starting in the 1950s, was the flow of young ex-GIs and their wives to new suburban homes. (The postwar suburban housing boom is fully discussed in Chapter 6: *The Suburban Era*, so we will only touch on it here.) It is enough to say here that this movement to the suburbs continues today and has transformed North America from an urban to a suburban continent.

The second wave, beginning in the 1960s, was the out-movement of retail trade, especially the out-movement of the large department stores that have anchored the new suburban shopping malls since the 1970s. The malling of the land continues to the present day and will be discussed later in this chapter.

The third wave became a major force in the 1970s and still continues today. This is the out-movement of businesses and manufacturing from inner-city factories and firms to suburban business or industrial parks. Most economic activity is now suburban based. The bulk of the nation’s blue-collar as well as white-collar jobs are now located in the suburbs.

EDGELESS AND PRIVATE EDGE CITIES

Edge cities are difficult to define since they don’t look like we think cities should look, nor are they politically organized like cities. From earliest history cities have had clearly defined boundaries, often demarcated by an enclosing wall. However, while edge cities have jobs, shopping, and entertainment, they usually lack any clearly definable borders. Unlike legally defined cities and suburbs, there are no signposts to tell you when you are entering or leaving. *Edge cities do not have clearly defined legal edges.*²⁰ They lack municipal boundaries because they are not actually legal entities. Legally they often are non-place places, having names but not legal

status. Tysons Corner in Virginia outside of Washington, DC, is one of the nation's largest edge cities, having more office space than Tucson and more major retailing than Washington itself, but Tysons Corner, even with its over 100,000 jobs, doesn't appear as a municipality on Virginia state maps. Legally, Tysons Corner is just another part of Fairfax County.

Not being legal municipalities, edge cities have another strange characteristic for a place called a city: They have no civic order or elected government. Being private places they are not governed by municipal legislation, codes, or ordinances. They are private property, governed, not by elected representatives, but by corporate policy. Tysons Corner—like Dallas's Las Colinas, Los Angeles's Marina Del Rey, and Boston's Burlington Mall—are, in effect, *private cities* unto themselves.

What makes these places a sharp break with the past is not that they are planned, newer, shinier, or enclosed with air conditioning, but that they are *private domains* rather than incorporated, legally defined areas. The old downtowns, whether planned or unplanned, are public spaces open to all. The rules that govern public dress and behavior are found in ordinances passed by elected officials. Edge cities, for all their open courtyards and fountains, and all their calling themselves "town centers," are fundamentally different.

Basic questions, such as who can be in an outer-city office park or shopping mall and what they can or cannot do while there, are determined not by civic ordinance but by private corporate policy. The new outer cities are administered by company decree. They may be safe, but they are not democratic. They are privately managed city-states controlled and managed by a financial, rather than a municipal, corporation.

Remarkably, this major shift of our outer cities from public to private control has taken place almost completely without public notice, discussion, or debate. The once-public city has been privatized without discussion. Residential areas within edge cities are sometimes even walled off and "gated" with private security guards restricting entrance.

BOOMBURGS

While edge cities are not incorporated places, "boomburbs" is a name given to extremely fast-growing suburban *incorporated places* that have populations over 100,000

but are *not* the largest city in the metro area. Boomburg suburbs typically grew fast prior to the housing recession, but far slower since then. While they have housing, retail centers, and entertainment venues they lack the dense business cores found in traditional cities. As of 2003 the U.S. had fifty-three boomburg suburbs.²¹ Most are found in the Southwest. The Los Angeles, Dallas, and Phoenix metro areas contain 60 percent of the nation's boomburg suburbs. Many of these are large master-planned community developments. The five fastest growing during the early 2000s were: Gilbert in the Phoenix metro area, North Las Vegas and Henderson in Las Vegas, Chandler in Phoenix, and Irvine in Los Angeles. The housing recession hit particularly severely in outer Phoenix and Las Vegas. Future dramatic growth of boomburg suburbs in the Southwest is likely to be constrained by limited water supplies.

SUBURBAN BUSINESS GROWTH

The building of the interstate expressway system over the last fifty years gave industry a genuine alternative to a central-city location. Goods could now be cheaply and rapidly moved by truck rather than rail. Outer suburban land was cheap, and the taxes were low. Importantly, manufacturing plants could be designed from the inside out. A common pattern is to lay out an assembly line all on one level and then simply build walls around the workspace. The size and shape of the building is determined by the needs of the factory rather than by the size and shape of a lot or of an existing plant.

Thus, in the decades following World War II industry increasingly leapfrogged over intermediate city residential areas and moved directly from the inner city to suburban industrial parks. When a firm was serving only local markets, a central-city location, with its ease of access to all parts of a city, made sense. Such a location also was necessary if the major transport between cities was done by rail. Today, however, firms with national markets usually seek a location on or near an interstate expressway.

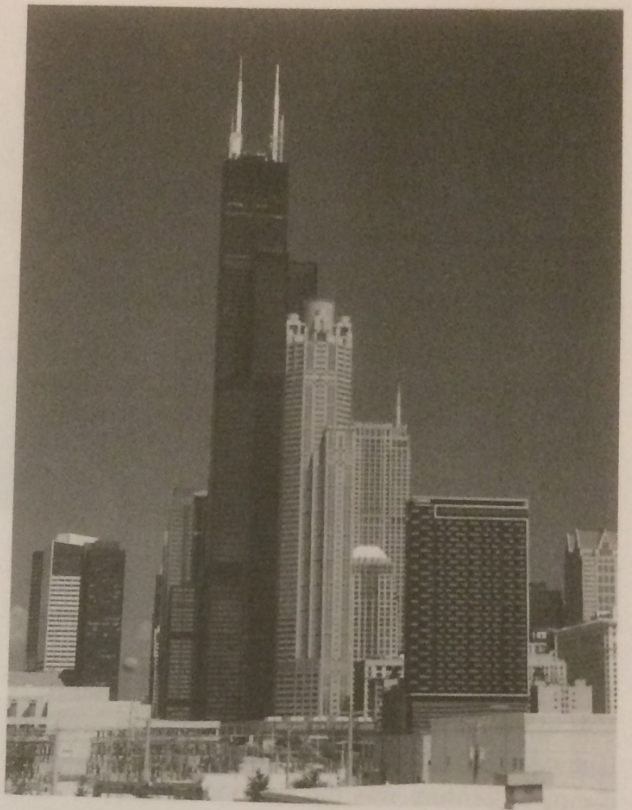
The industrial park has supplanted the city factory, with over twice as many manufacturing jobs now located in suburbs as in central cities. Not only manufacturing but also white-collar jobs have been suburbanized. The

earlier suburbanization of population provided a suburban workforce, a workforce that now commutes to work by auto. In turn, the location of most jobs in suburbs encouraged even more workers to move to new suburban tract type housing developments.

Today, employment of all sorts is most likely to have a suburban zip code. Over 90 percent of new office space is built in suburbs. Outer Dallas, for example, has three times the office space of the central business district, while suburban Atlanta has twice the office space of the center city. Even in the New York metropolitan area, northern New Jersey now has more office space than Manhattan. Nor are suburban offices simply back-office operations seeking low rentals; the executive suite has come to the suburbs. For example, Plano, Texas, north of Dallas, was a small residential suburb two decades ago. Today it is a business center and the national headquarters for five major corporations: Frito-Lay, Electronic Data Systems, Murata Business Systems, Southland Life Insurance, and J. C. Penney. The suburban economy is substantially service-oriented, often with its marketplace patterns being nationally or internationally, rather than locally, focused.

Sears is an example of the national suburban shift. In the 1970s Sears consolidated its operations in the then world's tallest building, the 110-story Sears Tower in downtown Chicago. However, as Sears was placing its head in the clouds, its network of urban-based stores increasingly lost touch with suburban customers. Sears went suburban in 1992 moving all of its 5,000 merchandise-group employees out of the Sears Tower to suburban Hoffman Estates, 35 miles northwest of Chicago. The new Sears headquarters, named Prairie Stone, occupies a former soybeanfield and boasts 200 acres of reconstructed prairie and wetlands. The highest building is six stories high. The low-rise spread out nature of Prairie Stone allows for greater interaction between different departments.

Growth of outer metropolitan-area private economies is increasingly driven by job growth in high-end service industries such as information technology, biomedical research, and business services. Suburban Fairfax County, Virginia, outside Washington, DC, now has some 2,000 high-tech firms.²² The major per capita locations of Internet addresses are not the cities of New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago. The places with the



Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower) is the second tallest building in the United States. Sears moved its headquarters out of the Tower in 1992 to a suburban office park named Prairie Stone some 35 miles northwest. As of 2012 the Willis Tower became the headquarters for United Airlines. iStockphoto

largest per capita number of .com, .net, and .org addresses are suburban Herndon and Fairfax Counties in Virginia, both housing edge cities of Washington, DC.

As suburbs have gone from being primarily residential areas to being the primary location of shopping, manufacturing, and office space, the old Burgess hypothesis of economic growth moving out from the CBD through a series of zones has become history. Business, retail trade, and homeowners all have leaped to the outer ring of the metro area. Suburbs have become the new commercial and economic cores of metropolitan areas, and as a result our spatial models of the metropolitan area have gone from



Sears Prairie Stone. Courtesy of Sears

core-periphery models to multinucleated or multi-centered models.

MALLING OF THE LAND

If the dominant urban symbol for the middle of the twentieth century was the skyscraper, the dominant symbol for the early decades of the twenty-first century is the shopping mall. As expressed by Kowinski, "More than locations for consumption, malls have become the signature structure of the age."²³ Some, such as the economist Tyler Cowen, even praise the commercial culture of the mall as the best of all possible worlds.²⁴ You may love the malls, or believe their consumerism values represent all that is wrong with North America, but it is impossible to discuss contemporary metropolitan life without discussing the role of the shopping mall. The larger malls have become social as well as retail centers. They have become America's town centers and main streets. Shopping centers from convenience centers to massive malls now account for almost three-quarters of the nation's non-automotive retail sales.

Shopping centers are actually a rather new development. The first shopping center, as we understand the term, was Country Club Plaza, developed in 1923 in Kansas City. At the end of World War II, there were only eight shopping centers in all of North America. The first of the modern malls surrounded by parking

places was Northgate, which opened on the edge of Seattle in 1950. The first enclosed mall, Southdale Center, was built in 1956 just outside Minneapolis in Edina, Minnesota. Southdale Center, designed by the architect Victor Gruen, was refurbished and enlarged to 1.3 million square feet for its fiftieth anniversary in 2006. The now-ubiquitous food courts were first introduced by the Rouse Company in the early 1970s.

Today North America's 50,000 shopping malls are an integral part of the suburban landscape and range in size from small strip malls to monsters such as Canada's West Edmonton megamall, which is the size of 115 football fields and has 800 shops, 19 movie theatres, 110 places to eat, a 355-room hotel, the world's largest indoor amusement park, a five-acre lake with the world's largest wave machine, and parking for over 200,000 cars. Malls sometimes almost become cities unto themselves. San Jose, California, has an enclosed air-conditioned center that includes 130 stores, 27 restaurants, and 9,000 parking spaces. Houston's Galleria, which initially set the pattern for the multiuse malls to follow, is modeled after a nineteenth-century gallery in Milan, Italy; it has three levels, and in addition to the usual department stores, restaurants, and shops, it also includes an athletic club with ten air-conditioned tennis courts and a jogging track. (Some small college athletic departments would gladly exchange the facilities for those of this shopping mall.)

is conn



Four submarines provide rides in the huge West Edmonton Mall in Alberta, Canada. The mall also has a hotel with specially designed rooms including a "redneck" room where the bed is on the back of a pickup truck. © James Marshall/Corbis

to two high-rise office buildings and a 404-room hotel.

Malls, with their fountains, film festivals, and wine tastings, have come a long way from the mercantile stores of the last century. The shopping mall is replacing Main Street as the core of the community. Increasingly, the malls serve social as well as commercial functions. (Reflecting this, a shopping mall in the author's metro area changed its name from "Chesterfield Mall" to "Chesterfield Towne Center.")

Malls, with their "mall rats" and "mall bunnies," provide a place for young adolescents to gather and socialize. At the other end of the age spectrum, the mall also provides a safe and weather-free place for

seniors to walk and socialize.²⁵ Many malls now have small playground areas where children can play while parents chat. As downtowns have faded as centers of retail trade, dining, and entertainment, the shopping mall has become the contemporary public space version of the ancient Greek agoras.

MALLS AND "STREET SAFETY"

Malls are designed to exude an image of being a comfortable, safe, and secure place. In good part this is done by excluding from the mall any persons or activities that might seem disruptive or disturbing. The strength of traditional downtowns is their ability to produce surprise and excitement, of not knowing what is around the next corner. Malls, by contrast, emphasize total predictability. No street musicians, no religious speakers, no one soliciting for charity, and no activities that might in any way disturb or offend any customers. For all their open courtyards and talk of being "town centers," malls are rigorously private, and thus can ban from the property teenagers who are disruptive, panhandlers, and bag ladies. No one has a right to walk into a mall just because they feel like going there. (The Mall of America bans unaccompanied teenagers on weekend nights.) The mall police enforce the image of the mall as a secure place into which outside problems don't intrude. They may even patrol parking lots in highly visible vehicles with revolving flashing lights.

However, while various mall security staffs may wear the uniforms, badges, and even weapons of police, they usually are "rent-a-cop" private security officers dressed to look like police officers. Their role is basically public relations. In most states security guards lack police powers to arrest. They can only hold someone until the real police arrive. Similarly, the stop signs on mall roads, while looking official, are only advisory since the mall rights-of-way are private, not municipal or state roads.

To maintain their image of safety, malls use their advertising clout to see that crimes committed on mall property are not reported on local TV or in the local newspaper. Malls and their stores are major media advertisers. In reality malls have problems with car theft, robbery, and occasionally even rape, but to acknowledge that malls have crimes other than shoplifting would damage the illusion that mall operators seek to maintain.

BOX 5.2 THE ULTIMATE MALLS

A Goliath of a shopping mall is the West Edmonton Mall in Edmonton, Alberta.* Edmonton is a city of a million persons, but during after-Christmas sales the mall alone draws as many as a quarter of a million people a day to its site on the cold Canadian prairie. This far north mall attracts 20 million people a year in a country of 33 million people. Visitors come to see a shopper's fantasyland. There are some 800 stores, 110 restaurants, 19 movie theaters, and even a Caesar's Palace Bingo Parlor, as well as the world's largest indoor amusement park, with 24 rides including two 13-story-plus roller coasters. There are, additionally, an 18-hole miniature par-46 golf course, an NHL-size ice rink, and a dolphin lagoon. And set in a balmy 86-degree atmosphere, the world's largest indoor wave pool boasts a sand beach, palm trees, and 22 water slides. On a lower level, the mall also houses an aquarium. All this in often-frigid northern Alberta.

The most spectacular feature, however, is the mall's 200-foot artificial lake. At one end of the lake, a replica of Christopher Columbus's ship, the *Santa Maria*, rests on a coral reef, illuminated by a giant skylight. At the other end of the lake, children and parents line up to cruise the 20-foot-deep lake in one of four 25-person submarines. The mall actually has more submarines than the Canadian Navy.

But there is an even larger mall. In 1992 the Ghermezian brothers, who built the West Edmonton Mall, opened a United States version in Bloomington, Minnesota (south of Minneapolis),

called the "Mall of America." The Mall of America covers 4.2 million square feet. It has 520 stores, 14 movie screens, and 46 places to eat. Its nickelodeon UNIVERSE for kids has a 7-acre indoor amusement park, including a half-mile-long rubber-wheeled roller coaster, a log flume ride. Inside the mall Dinosaur Walk Museum has more than 60 life-sized dinosaurs and interactive displays. The Sea Life Minnesota Aquarium houses a 1.2 million gallon aquarium and the world's largest shark collection. The Mall of America has 400 live trees, 300,000 plants, and a 4-story waterfall. It also has its own zip code, police, doctors, dentists, and a public school for the children of the mall's 12,000 employees. The mall has some 40 million visits annually, or roughly eight times the population of Minnesota.

In spite of all this the Mall of America had slipped to third place in retail footage by 2007. To reclaim its number-one status the Mall of America plans to double its size. In addition to adding more retail shops, Phase II will add a 6,000-seat music theater, an ice rink, and 3 hotels.[†] Expansion began in 2012.

Where all this will end is a matter of professional dispute. Some see entertainment malls as a new model, while others believe that the megamall, like the brontosaurus, is the final gasp of a concept that has been pushed to excess. So far the "Build it and they will come" approach seems to be working.

*Partially based on material in J. John Palen, *The Suburbs* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995), pp. 199–201.
[†]"Mall of America Plans to More than Double Size," Associated Press, March 27, 2007.

NON-METROPOLITAN GROWTH

Historically, metropolitan areas in the United States have grown faster than non-metropolitan areas. The classic ecological model implicitly assumed continued movement of population from rural hinterlands to metropolitan areas. This clearly was the case for the first seventy years of the twentieth century, when the metropolitan sector—core or fringe—was growing while rural areas consistently lost population. However, during the 1970s, for the first time, rural counties not only stopped declining but increased in population. Metropolitan dominance was said to be challenged by an emerging pattern of increased dispersion and deconcentration.²⁶ However, the rural growth turned out to only be a blip in the pattern of faster metro area growth and talk of a "rural renaissance" faded. Between 2010 and 2012 most rural counties saw a negative growth rate.²⁷

DIFFUSE GROWTH

There is no rebirth of rural ways of life.²⁸ Rather, what we are witnessing is the out-movement of population into a new form of community that is more diffuse.²⁹ Rural areas that are growing are doing so due to in-migration by previous metro area residents rather than natural increase. What this means is that the outlying growth is in sprawling exurbs. Some rural area in-movers are retired. Some businesses are also locating in more rural areas. (L.L. Bean operates from a small town in rural Maine, and Lands' End from a town in rural Wisconsin). Today, one of the fastestgrowing rural area is in North Dakota where major fracking for gas and oil is occurring. Rapidly growing non-metropolitan areas most often are those economically tied into the metropolitan nexus, but legally outside the metro area. Often these outer sprawl exurb areas can't be clearly defined as

suburb, small town, or rural countryside. What is not taking place is a "rural renaissance" or "rural rebound." Both the proportion and the absolute number of persons actually engaged in agriculture continue to decrease. Farm population dropped about one-quarter during the last decade, and today under 2 percent of the U.S. population remains on farms. There is not any rural rebound or return of the family farm.

Additionally, growth in some rural areas is related to providing recreational and retirement opportunities for metropolitan residents. Thus, this non-metropolitan growth can be best seen not as something separate from urban areas but rather as an extension of the metropolitan area's influence beyond the daily commuting range. More than fifty years ago, Louis Wirth noted that urbanism—that is, urban behavior patterns—had become the American way of life. Today it is far more so. Even isolated towns in Montana boast drive-in gourmet coffee stands.

As we continue to expand into a national metropolitan society, distinctions between metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas become even more blurred. Growing non-metropolitan areas don't look all that different from metro area exurbs.

NATIONAL SOCIETY

We are now part of a national metropolitan system in which old differences cease to make a difference. The pattern of discrete metropolitan concentrations is being challenged by an emerging pattern of increased dispersion and metropolitan de-concentration. Metropolitan areas are no longer even semi-independent. Local banks run by local bankers who knew their customers have largely been replaced by a handful of national banks. National digital smart-phone networks, email, the Internet, Twitter, and FedEx have all reduced the friction of space.

While at the turn of the century the commuter railroad and streetcar made it possible for a vanguard of businesspeople to move their residences from the city, commuter air travel now puts a premium on accessibility to an airport. Distance now is measured not in miles or kilometers, but by time. The question "How far is it?" commonly anticipates a temporal rather than spatial response: How long does it take to get there? Increased

mobility of goods, persons, and ideas suggests that a new urban phase—a national metropolitan urban system—is being created.

Air shuttles tie cities together: a commuter between New York and Chicago or Los Angeles and San Francisco is able to catch a flight in either direction almost every half hour from dawn to dusk. Ironically, shuttle flights linking Los Angeles and San Francisco make it easier (and faster) to move between these cities than to move around Los Angeles itself. It is one of the peculiarities of modern life that the air shuttles from city to city can offer more frequent, and even faster public transportation than that often available within cities. Increasingly, we don't even physically commute; rather we telecommute. Physical distance is losing importance.

The emerging pattern of a national metropolitan society forces us to rethink traditional assumptions. Half a century ago, Otis Dudley Duncan suggested that the concept of a "rural-urban continuum" was losing empirical validity.³⁰ Today, emerging nonmetropolitan growth patterns suggest that the concept of a metropolitan-non-metropolitan continuum is also losing utility. Contemporary distinctions between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan are becoming more blurred with each passing decade. New patterns contradict the old assumption that the social and economic factors of urbanization are a consequence of the distance from the point of population concentration. This change has yet to be fully reflected in federal policy or research.³¹

In the contemporary information society, it is becoming more difficult to distinguish metropolitan and non-metropolitan residents on the basis of occupations, consumer habits, and degree of sophistication.³² In many respects the metropolitan-non-metropolitan differences have ceased to make a difference. Whether we live in a metropolitan area or not, we are all part of a metropolitan society.

THE RISE OF THE SUNBELT

POPULATION AND ECONOMIC SHIFTS

One of the most dramatic urban changes of the last forty years has been the historic shift of population and power from the old industrial heartland of the

TABLE 5.2 POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR THE 10 METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS WITH THE LARGEST NUMERIC INCREASE: 2007 TO 2008

Rank in Numeric Change	Metropolitan Statistical Area	Population Estimates		Change Number
		2008	2007	
1	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	6,300,006	6,153,474	146,532
2	Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	5,728,143	5,597,958	130,185
3	Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	4,281,899	4,165,921	115,978
4	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA	5,376,285	5,261,296	114,989
5	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	12,872,808	12,784,612	88,196
6	New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	19,006,798	18,922,571	84,227
7	Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI	9,569,624	9,496,853	72,771
8	Austin-Round Rock, TX	1,652,602	1,592,590	60,012
9	San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	4,274,531	4,216,125	58,406
10	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	5,358,130	5,302,295	55,835

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2009.

Northeast and North-central regions to the metropolises of the West and the South (see Table 5.2). The older northern areas are sometimes collectively referred to as the Frostbelt, Snowbelt, or Rustbelt. The term *Rustbelt* refers to the decline of the heavy manufacturing cities that during much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries defined America's industrial might. However, by the 1970s the older northern cities were experiencing deindustrialization. Northern cities with outdated industrial plants lost manufacturing jobs, first to nonunion southern states, and then to Mexico and Asia. Some Northern and Northeastern cities adapted and became thriving technologically-oriented centers (e.g. Boston). Others did not (e.g. Detroit).

Sunbelt states, with their emphasis on service jobs, and their perceived quality of life advantages, generally have prospered. The Census Bureau reports that as of the 2010 census, the fifty fastest-growing metro areas were concentrated in the West and South.³³ The Sunbelt extends roughly from Virginia in the East through the states of the South and Southwest, up through California in the West. The rise of Houston from a steamy Texas town of little economic interest to its role as the oil capital of the world typifies the pattern of Sunbelt growth. Houston, with just over 6 million

people in its metro area, is now the nation's fifth largest. It is exceeded in size only by New York, Los Angeles, Dallas, and Chicago. Without the technology of air conditioning this transformation would have been impossible.

A striking example of the growing sway of the Sunbelt is that Peoria, Illinois—long touted by comedians, politicians, and marketers as the quintessential heartland city—has been passed in size by the lesser-known Peoria, Arizona. As of 2006 the Sunbelt Phoenix suburb of Peoria had grown to 138,143 residents while the Illinois Rustbelt Peoria had declined to 112,936. The old question, "How will it play in Peoria?" thus takes on an entirely new meaning. Today, which Peoria provides the truer mirror of America?

Since the 1970s population growth below the Mason-Dixon Line and west of the Rockies has outpaced that of the nation. However, the housing recession hit the western and southern Sunbelt states especially hard. Previously boom cities such as Phoenix and Miami found themselves with a glut of unsold homes. The Great Recession basically froze people in place, but now the exodus from the North to Sunbelt states has resumed.³⁴ All save two of the ten fastest-growing metropolitan areas in 2013 were in the West or South. California, Texas, and Florida are projected to account

for 45 percent of the United States' net population change between now and 2025.³⁵ California, Texas, and Florida are also the nation's three most populous states (as of 2014 New York slipped to fourth). For several decades the fastest-growing metro areas have been in the West or South.³⁶

This is a huge transformation for until roughly fifty years ago the South was an economic backwater. Since then population and businesses have been moving to the South and Southwest. Businesses are said to be attracted to such areas by a "good business climate," by which is meant lower wages, lower taxes, lower land costs, and a lower rate of unionization. The Sunbelt as an energy-producing area also enjoys a cost advantage, particularly when oil costs are high. The milder climate requires less energy for heat (this is only partially offset by higher air-conditioning costs).

Quality-of-life factors such as warmer winters and the chance to engage in outdoor activities—such as playing golf most of the year—also play a role. Also, the racial climate has improved markedly. Some Sunbelt cities also have been able to annex outlying areas before they develop. This means the cities are less financially stressed because they can include within their city boundaries most new "suburban" development. By contrast, almost all northern cities have had to deal with fixed city boundaries since roughly the 1920s, or even earlier in the case of cities in the Northeast.

Over the last quarter of a century Sunbelt cities such as Charlotte, Atlanta, Orlando, Dallas–Fort Worth, San Antonio, Albuquerque, Phoenix, and San Diego have all become world-class locations. Greater Los Angeles, in terms of economic activity and cultural influence, is now challenging New York. Some argue that Los Angeles will be the leading Western hemisphere city of the latter twenty-first century.

REGIONAL CONSEQUENCES

The consequences of interregional population shifts have been dramatic. The South, which historically always had migratory outflows of population, now is the fastest-growing region in the nation. The once-economically all powerful industrial cities of the North have experienced declines in both population and economic influence. In 2006 North Carolina displaced New Jersey from the ranks of the ten most populous

states.³⁷ Northern Rustbelt cities dependent on older industries are suffering population declines. For example, the central city of St. Louis now has only as many people as it did in 1890, Cleveland now has as many as during World War I, and Detroit now has fewer than in 1920.

This does not mean all northern cities and metro areas are in economic decline; most clearly are not. What it does mean is that in general population is flowing south and west, attracted by new jobs, a mild climate, a lower cost of living, and a lifestyle stressing outdoor living. While the North and Midwest still have more corporate headquarters, there is clear movement toward the South and the West.³⁸

The fastest-growing Sunbelt industries are service industries such as real estate and tourism, plus the newer, highly skilled industries such as electronics, energy, and aircraft. These often have a preference for a location in the Southwest, particularly suburbs of major cities. Federal-level political decisions, such as locating the space agency in Houston and the national center for silicon research in Austin, have strongly reinforced growth trends. Military budgets disproportionately directed monies and employment to areas with substantial military basing, i.e., the South. Also, retirees often head south, especially to the states of Florida and Arizona. The Great Recession slowed this trend, but it is slowly resuming with the better economic climate.

Sunbelt populations are more likely to vote conservative and are less likely to support liberal political candidates or policies—excepting firm support of Social Security by the retired elderly. The political implications of the Sunbelt clearly gaining political influence and power can be seen in Figure 5.3. The 2010 census-based reapportionment saw Texas gain four seats in the House of Representatives, Florida gain two, and Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, Utah, Washington, and South Carolina each gaining one seat. These are states that usually vote Republican. New York and Ohio lost two seats, while New Jersey, Michigan, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, Illinois, and Pennsylvania, each lost a seat. Political power clearly is shifting south and west. Many political writers see this mostly benefitting Republicans.³⁹

Sunbelt growth is not a consequence of runaway northern industries that abandoned the industrial

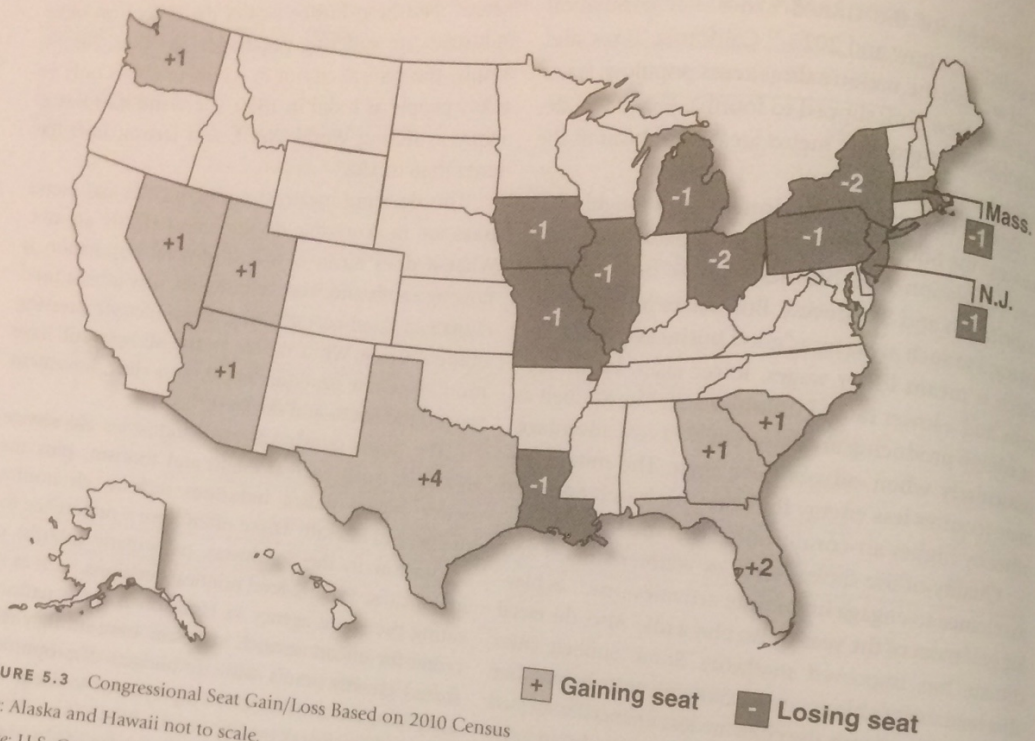


FIGURE 5.3 Congressional Seat Gain/Loss Based on 2010 Census
 Note: Alaska and Hawaii not to scale.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Election Data Services

heartland to build low-wage nonunion plants in the South.⁴⁰ Rather than attracting older smokestack industries, the Sunbelt states developed new economic activities. As summed up by Kirkpatrick Sale, the writer who first used the term "Sunbelt":

In broad terms there has been a shift from the traditional heavy manufacturing long associated with the industrial belt of the Northeast to the new technological industries that have grown up in the Southern Rim—aerospace, defense, electronics.⁴¹

Newer cities of the Sunbelt, partially because of the office-at-home phenomenon, also require far less office space. Greater New York has some 27 feet of office space per person. In Greater Los Angeles, by comparison, the figure is a mere 15 square feet per person. Telecommuting

is becoming more common, and the consultant subculture often works at home.

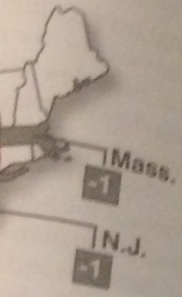
SUNBELT PROBLEMS

The Sunbelt, however, is not all sunshine. Breakneck growth has brought not only jobs but also massive urban sprawl, huge traffic congestion, overtaxed water and sewer systems, rising air pollution, and widespread environmental degradation. Houston, for example, has the worst air pollution in the nation. Additionally, auto congestion, water supplies, and sewage disposal problems are growing ever more severe.⁴²

Cities such as Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Albuquerque, Phoenix, and San Diego have all had to cope with phenomenal growth, and the responses have not all been similar.⁴³ During the last decade, Sunbelt metro

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areas were most likely to be overbuilt, and thus they were hit hardest by recession. Sunbelt cities are pressured to expand schools, social services, water plants, roadways, and waste treatment facilities. All these require financing. At the same time, citizen groups lobby for limits on taxes. Traditionally, cities of the Sunbelt have had low taxes but also have provided lower-level services, especially for poorer residents. Today, city officials are caught by newcomers having contradictory expectations of northern-level services and southern-level taxes. How a state chooses to spend its resources helps determine the future of its cities. In the mid-1990s, for example, Texas voters approved issuing bonds to build new prisons, but turned down issuing bonds for building new schools. Texas now has, proportionately, the world's largest prison population. However, it is doubtful whether having new prisons rather than new schools is going to be more helpful for the long-run future of the state.

It should also be remembered that Sunbelt cities are not automatically immune to the population declines that affected Frostbelt cities. While 86 percent of the U.S. cities in the Northeast and 66 percent of those in the industrial North-central region lost population during the last decade, this was also true of 26 percent of the South's cities and 12 percent of the West's. A Sunbelt location does not prevent people from moving out. Some long-term problems are emerging. Low wages once gave the Sunbelt a competitive advantage. However, not only have Sunbelt wages gone up, but in a global economy firms that once moved to Alabama or the Carolinas now move to Mexico, Southeast Asia, or China. Nothing is guaranteed. For example, boom areas such as Las Vegas and San Diego, which had red-hot property values, saw real estate prices tumble in 2007–2008. As of 2010, Las Vegas led the nation in housing foreclosures. As of 2014 it was slowly recovering.

Finally, in trying to build a high-technology economy, some parts of the South and Southwest still are hampered by academic systems that need upgrading, particularly at the primary and secondary school levels. In general, the South and Southwest have been less willing to invest the necessary tax money in developing their human capital. Teachers are comparatively poorly paid and public school systems often lag behind the rest of the nation. High-tech firms require well-educated workers.

A condition Mercedes-Benz placed on opening its auto plant in Alabama was that the local school system be upgraded. Unless the South invests more in education it may again see itself outshone by northern and central regions with better-supported public educational systems at the primary, secondary, and university levels.

Geography is not destiny. There is nothing necessarily permanent about the Sunbelt boom. In a global economy economic success increasingly depends not on geography, but on having an educated and flexible labor force. Businesses seeking just a cheap labor force move to Asia.

MOVEMENT TO THE COASTS

The early twenty-first century continues to show movement toward the Atlantic, Gulf, and at a slower rate, Pacific shorelines. More than 41 million Americans, one in seven persons, now lives in a county abutting the eastern or southern seaboard.⁴⁴ And this figure does not include those with vacation homes on the shore. The shoreline strip is growing significantly faster than the rest of the country (a partial exception are western states such as Arizona). All the way from Maine to Texas, seaside property is burgeoning. Wealth generated by a strong economy, and more flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting, are resulting in more and more people living permanently near the shore.

Seasonal resort towns are turning into sprawling full-time communities. Cape Cod, Massachusetts, for example now has a year-round population of 225,000. The Outer Banks of North Carolina a two decades ago were largely deserted after Labor Day; now even a Wal-Mart has been built on the sand banks. Less mass movement to the beach has taken place on the West Coast. Especially in California the beaches and bluffs along the Pacific generally have state protections against private development. Also on the West Coast, the south-flowing California current keeps all but the most southern California beaches chilly, even in summer. Along the East Coast, on the other hand, the water is kept warm by the north-flowing Gulf Stream. However, Mother Nature is not always benign on the warmer Atlantic and Gulf Coasts. Since 1995 there has been a rise in hurricanes. The risk of another major killer

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hurricane such as Katrina, which devastated New Orleans in 2005, or a tropical storm such as Sandy, which hit New York and New Jersey in 2012, is at an all-time high. Also, human-caused disasters such as the 2010 BP oil spill can destroy ocean-based economies.

The costs of coastal living are not just paid by those living on the water's edge. New populations at the beach mean that existing taxpayers have to subsidize new water, sewer, and road systems. Major state roads have to be built so that when a dangerous storm hits, evacuation gridlock does not result. One of the reasons people are willing, literally, to build their castles on the sand in high-risk coastal areas is because they don't have to pay many of the costs of living in these high-risk areas. Federal disaster and insurance programs help them out if a hurricane, storm, or even coastal erosion damages or wipes out their property.

This is known as the "moral hazard" problem. It occurs when existing federal programs, by protecting against loss, inadvertently create the very problem they were designed to prevent. Since government foots much of the bill for coastal disasters, people can afford to move to unstable coastal areas.

Given these circumstances it is not surprising that we are rushing like lemmings toward the sea. The National Flood Insurance Act provides up to \$350,000 insurance for properties private insurance firms will not cover. Currently it covers over 5 million properties valued at over \$700 billion. The federal government even pays for bringing in sand to rebuild beaches. Although the program has come under attack as being environmentally unsound, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers spends \$80 million a year just to rebuild beaches. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimates that even without storms some 30,000 coastal homes sit on land that will be under water by 2030.⁴⁵

SUMMARY

Metropolitan areas are replacing cities as the major urban unit, and within metro areas suburban edge cities are the locus of growth. The first half of the twentieth century saw a major inflow of population into metro areas, with the central city clearly dominating the metro area economically, socially, and demographically.

Since the mid-twentieth century, movement has been toward the periphery (and beyond). Suburban areas have experienced dramatic growth. Today over 60 percent of metro-area populations live in suburbs, and in some metro areas the figure is far higher. As of 2010 there were 381 Census Bureau-defined metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). Canada has thirty-three metropolitan areas with an urban core population of at least 100,000.

The growth of metro areas during the twentieth century is closely related to technological breakthroughs in transportation and communication. Automobile registration has gone from 2.5 million in 1915 to one car for every two people today. Not until 1920 did half of all Americans have telephones. Today smartphones are commonplace, and businesses no longer require a central-city location. Decentralization to fringe locations has been somewhat selective. Downtowns, with their high-rise buildings, are still cost-effective for finance, advertising, legal services, and management operations that have limited space requirements.

Cities from New York to Chicago to Atlanta to Phoenix are experiencing downtown office building. However, growth also is taking place in America's approximately 250 suburban edge cities. Edge cities are hard to define because they lack clearly defined legal edges. They are usually not legal entities but placeless places. Edge cities also differ from central cities insofar as edge cities are legally private places without any civic order or elected government. This privatization of the edge cities has taken place largely without public debate or even discussion.

The majority of blue-collar as well as white-collar employment is now suburban. Northern New Jersey has more office space than Manhattan, and most industry has a suburban zip code. Suburban shopping malls have become the dominant metropolitan symbol for the twenty-first century. Today there are 50,000 shopping malls that have replaced Main Street as the center of the community. Malls are designed to project a safe and secure image, and activities or persons that management views as potentially disruptive are banned from the corporate-owned and -managed malls.

Rural areas are generally experiencing population declines. There is not a rural renaissance or return to

farm life. Some non-metropolitan growth is the result of sprawl from metropolitan areas and some is occurring in outlying areas providing recreational and retirement opportunities for metro-area residents. Gas and oil fracking is booming some isolated areas in places such as North Dakota. Economically and socially we are becoming a national society.

For the last forty plus years, growth in the Sunbelt has outdistanced that of the nation. The Sunbelt stretching from Virginia through the South and Southwest to California generally benefits from lower energy costs and quality-of-life advantages such as warmer winters. Sunbelt economic growth has not been the result of capturing runaway Northern industries but of developing new economic activities in aerospace, electronics, and technology. Recent population movement is toward coastal locations. One in seven Americans now lives in a county that abuts the shore. Coastal living is accelerated by the federal government largely funding insurance against storm losses and the other costs of building in high-risk coastal areas.

KEY CONCEPTS

Metropolitan Growth
 Metropolitan Statistical Area
 Commuting and Communication
 • Post-industrial Cities
 • Edge Cities
 Suburban Business Growth
 Suburban Shopping Malls
 Non-metropolitan Growth
 Sunbelt Cities
 Coastal Movement

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How is the metropolitan area replacing the city as the major urban unit?
2. What was the major population flow within metropolitan areas during the last half century and how did it differ from the pattern of the first half of the twentieth century?
3. How does the Census Bureau define urbanized areas, metropolitan statistical areas, and consolidated metropolitan statistical areas?

4. What economic activities have decentralized from central cities and which have not?
5. How are edge cities defined and where are they located?
6. What are the primary characteristics that distinguish edge cities from traditional city cores?
7. How do malls differ from traditional downtown shopping?
8. How has the Sunbelt changed in the forty years since it was first named and discussed?
9. What currently are the major regional population shifts and what are the consequences?
10. What problems face the Sunbelt?

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