



ULI Fall Meeting

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# Density or Sprawl?

## The Investment Case for Smart Urban Growth

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Director, JLL Global Research Programs









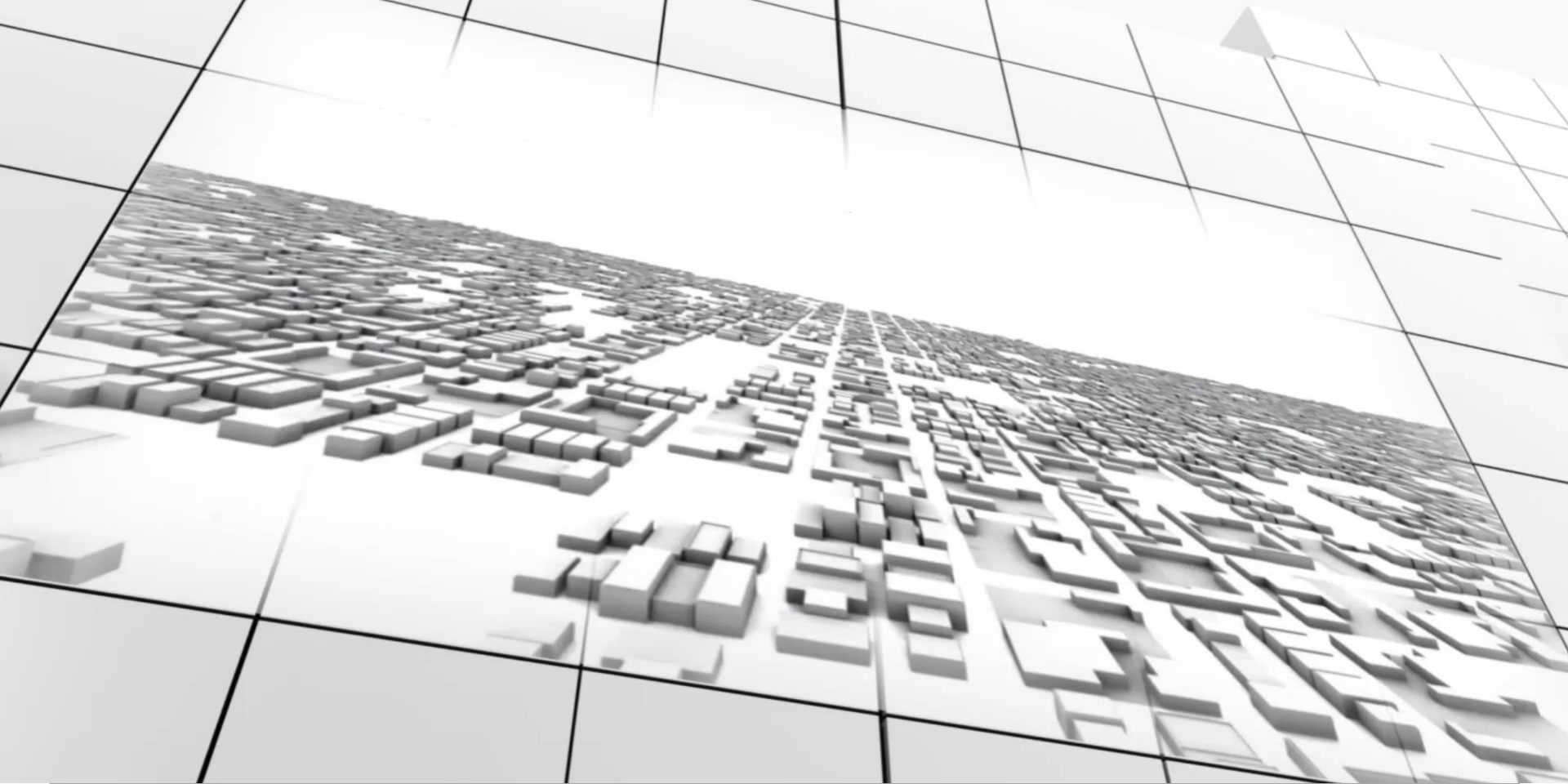




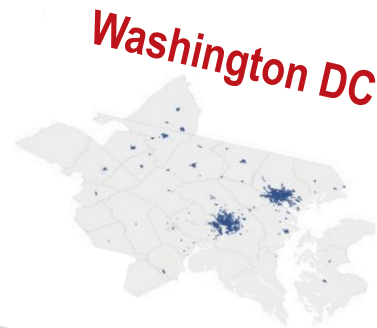
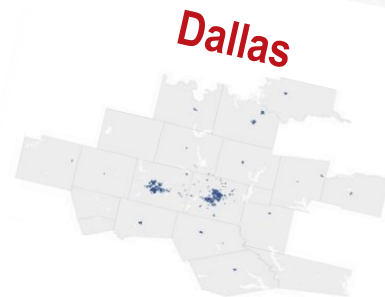
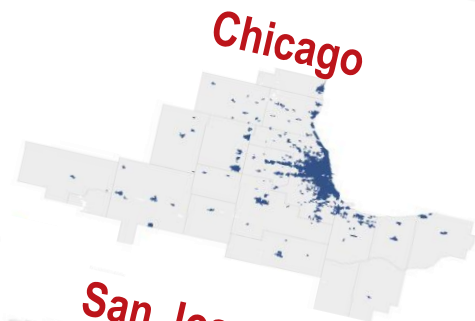


A 3D perspective view of a city model, showing a dense grid of rectangular blocks representing buildings. The model is set against a background of a large, light-colored grid that recedes into the distance, creating a sense of depth. The title text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

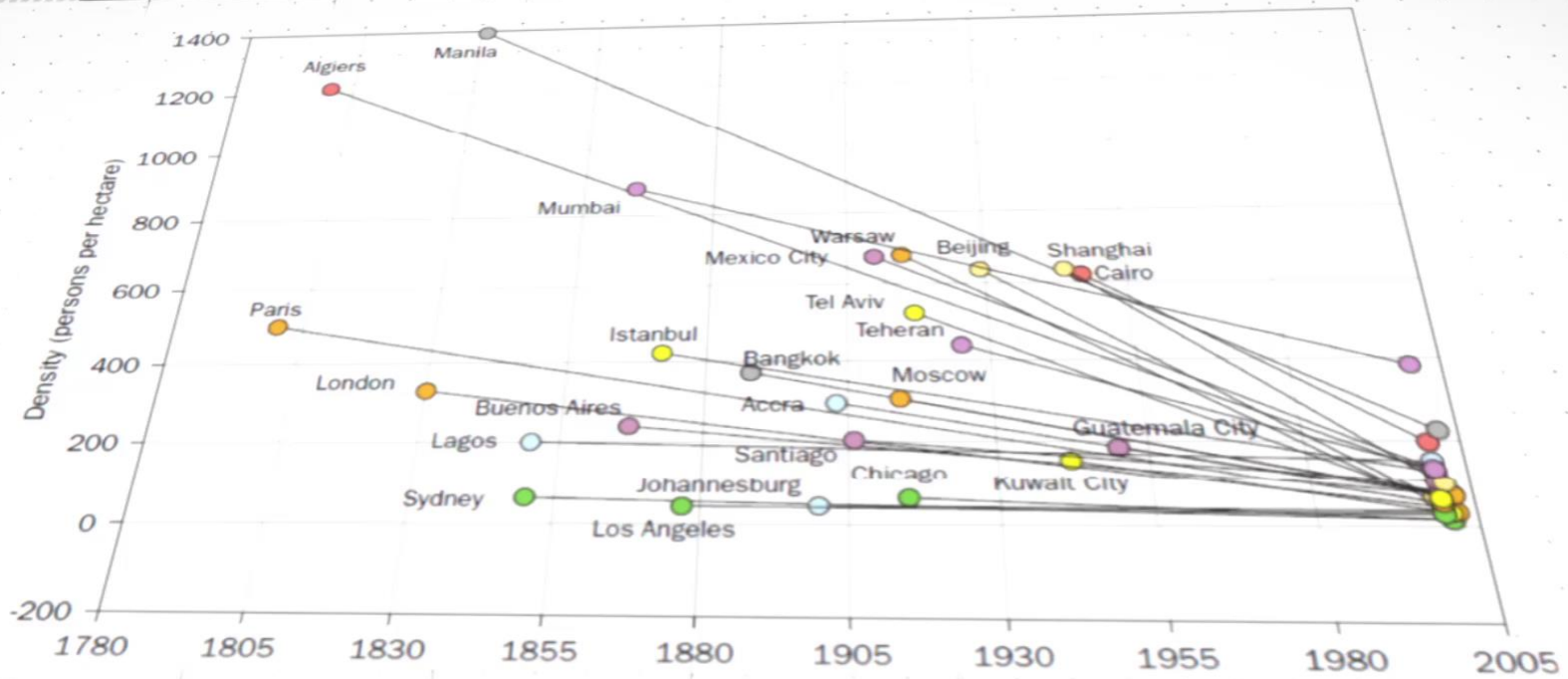
# *Density and Sprawl – a Polarising Debate*











## The general decline in built-up area densities in 25 Representative Cities 1800-2000

Source: Shlomo Angel: Making Room for a Planet of Cities





**Most compact, connected metro areas**

Source: Sprawl Index



**212 KINGSFORT**

**213 AUGUSTA**

**214 GREENVILLE**

**215 RIVERSIDE**

**216 BATON ROUGE**

**217 NASHVILLE**

**218 PRESCOTT**

**219 CLARKEVILLE**

**220 ATLANTA**

**221 HICKORY**



Most sprawling metro areas

Source: Sprawl Index



*Hong Kong*



*New York*



*London*



*Istanbul*



*Mumbai*



*Johannesburg*

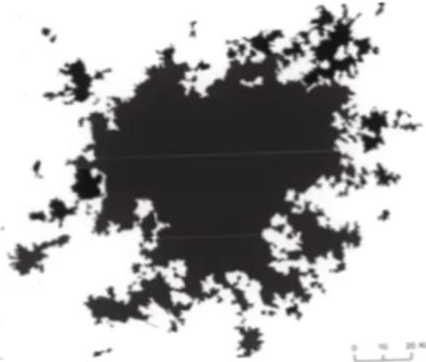
Source: LSE Cities

# Comparative City Densities



## ATLANTA

Urban area



5.3  
mill

Population

5.0  
mill

7,692  
sq km

Urban area

648  
sq km

6.9  
tons

Tpt  
emissions

1.16  
tons

## BARCELONA

Urban area



More compact development can reduce transport  
emissions by an order of magnitude

Comparative densities of similar populations

## Sprawl

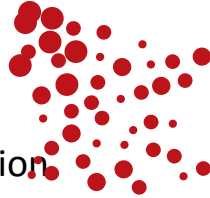


- More space – larger homes & gardens, especially for families
- Lower crime rates
- Quality of Life



- Environmental degradation
- Long commutes
- Lack of amenities
- Resource heavy

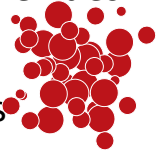
## Smart Growth?



- Walking, cycling & public transit
- Promotes innovation and diversity
- Emphasis on strong public realm
- Access to wide range of amenities



- Potentially high crime rates
- Can be loud & busy
- Poor design can lead to lack of human-scale, lack of privacy



## Unintended Consequences?



### DENSITY

#### PROS

- Mixed-use environment
- Multi-modal – designed for walking, cycling & public transit
- Clustering of activity – promotes innovation and diversity
- Emphasis on strong public realm
- Access to wide range of amenities

#### CONS

- Potentially high crime rates
- Can be loud & busy
- Poor design can lead to lack of human-scale, lack of privacy



### SPRAWL

#### PROS

- More space – larger homes & gardens, especially for families
- Lower crime rates

#### CONS

- Environmental degradation
- Entrenched automobile dependency – long commutes
- Lack of amenities

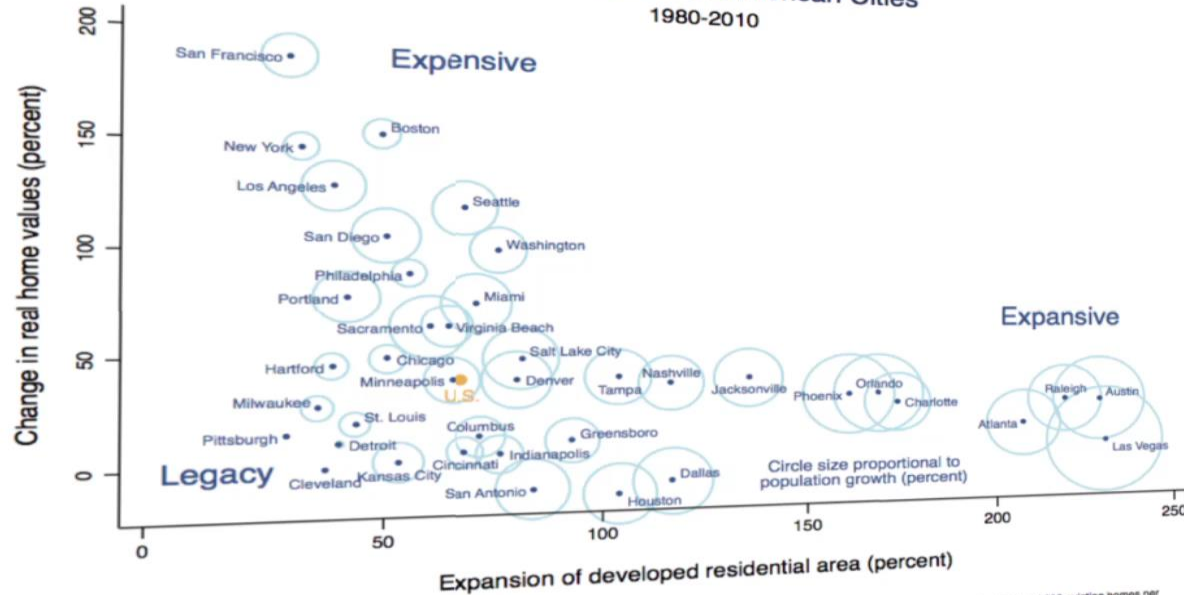




## What is good and bad density – common attributes?



## A Classification of American Cities 1980-2010



Source: BuildZoom.

Notes: Observations include the 40 most populated U.S. conurbations. This chart considers residential areas as developed when they exceed a density of 200 existing homes per square mile. Developed areas correspond to CSAs, or to CBSAs that are not part of a CSA. Housing prices are always at the CBSA level. The change in housing prices is the percent change in average inflation-adjusted quarterly housing prices during the decades spanning 2005-2014 and 1975-1984.



## The Evolution of the Density Debate

1950s

1980s

2000s

2010s

Land  
Preservation

Infrastructure  
& Design

Resources  
& Technology

Policy  
& Health



Sustainable  
Urbanization ?