

## Targeting the Suburban Urbanites: Marketing Central-City Housing

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### *Abstract*

This article explores target marketing as a means to identify which middle-income suburbanites may relocate to central cities. The most targetable populations reside near central cities and lead urban lifestyles. We term such people “suburban urbanites.” Geodemography, a method combining population and location, is used to classify suburban urbanites using data from Claritas Inc., a target marketer. Claritas divides the nation’s neighborhoods into lifestyle clusters by linking population density to demographic and consumptive patterns.

A case study of metropolitan Washington, DC, illustrates how target marketing works. We find that more than half the region’s middle-class, Claritas-defined urbanites live outside the District of Columbia. Thus, a large market of potential city dwellers lives in Washington’s suburbs. Target marketing enhances the statistical approaches traditionally used in policy making and may help cities understand and develop their comparative advantages.

**Keywords:** Marketing; Gentrification; Demographics; Housing

### **Introduction**

The people who choose the city, in sum, are of many different kinds, but they have one thing in common: they *like* the city. They like the privacy, they like the specialization, and the hundreds of one-of-the-kind shops; they like the excitement—to some, the sirens at night are music—they like the heterogeneity, the contrasts, the mixture of odd people. Even the touch of Sodom and Gomorrah intrigues them; they may never go to a nightclub, but they enjoy the thought that if

they were of the mind, there would be something interesting to go out to. (Whyte [1957] 1993, 40, emphasis in original)

This passage in William Whyte's classic essay "Are Cities Un-American?" sums up the key idea of this article: Some Americans like city living. We propose to formalize Whyte's intuitive sense of what makes people "citiphiles" into a method of identifying and quantifying potential urban dwellers among suburban populations.

Advances in marketing enable businesses to target individuals most likely to buy their goods and services. Given the right marketing approach, central-city housing can perhaps be packaged as a commodity itself. Even some middle-class and affluent suburbanites may prove willing consumers of urban shelter. The most targetable live in high-density suburbs that are adjacent to cities and urban in all but name. Indeed, market research shows that residents here ("suburban urbanites") have a lifestyle similar to that of many city dwellers.

The idea of selling cities is not new. America has a long tradition of urban boosterism. City boosters played a key role in establishing most of the nation's major cities (Glaab and Brown 1967; Reps 1979). The spirit of urban boosterism can be seen in a recent wave of place marketing (Ward 1996). These promotional campaigns typically focus on a city's cultural and entertainment assets—the bread-and-circus approach (e.g., New York City's now-famous "I Love NY" campaign). A growing literature now exists that instructs cities on how to market themselves (Bailey 1989; Kearns and Philo 1993; Kotler, Haider, and Rein 1993; Smyth 1994). Even cities with national reputations for high crime and urban decay, such as Detroit, are advised on ways to "reimage their pariah" status (Neill, Fitzsimmons, and Murtagh 1995).

Many of the campaigns promoting America's cities assume that most suburbanites are to some degree antiurban or, more simply, afraid of cities. Given the postwar history and politics of metropolitan America, this assumption is certainly reasonable. Such thinking guides the development of urban retail and entertainment centers intended to draw suburbanites back to the city. For example, the festival marketplaces that now line many urban waterfronts are designed as controlled environments, where suburbanites are only partly engaged by the city in an atmosphere that resembles a shopping mall. Festival marketplaces, from the South Street Seaport in New York to CitiWalk in

Los Angeles, essentially serve as halfway houses for “citiphobic” suburbanites.

Our approach to selling the city supplements the mainstream, suburban-driven method of urban redevelopment. Certainly, as they remake themselves, cities need to accommodate suburbanites to avoid an even greater disconnection with the rest of the region. But cities must also realize that not all suburbanites see them equally. Although many, if not most, suburbanites view the city with caution (which means that cities must work hard to appeal to them), a sizable minority of suburbanites show an affinity for cities. The latter group is the focus of our article. The presence of these suburban urbanites allows cities to build on their comparative advantages over the suburbs, rather than flattening such distinctions to accommodate the tastes of the most resistant suburbanites. We propose that cities dedicate themselves to cultivating a unique and marketable urbanism by identifying those who love cities and catering to their often nonmainstream needs.<sup>1</sup>

This article explores methods for locating and defining suburban urbanites. The first task requires conceptualizing suburban urbanites spatially and socially. This includes a thumbnail sketch of Claritas’s neighborhood lifestyle typology. Next, a case study of the Washington, DC, region provides an example of how to gauge specific populations of suburban urbanites. The article illustrates ways to identify potential markets, rather than offering many specifics on attracting suburbanites to cities. Finally, marketing data are evaluated as a tool for urban revitalization and redevelopment, to familiarize civic officials with the logic and use of marketing techniques that directly apply to urban and housing policies.

## **Defining cities and suburbs**

### *Conceptual issues*

The nation’s major metropolitan areas sprawl in ways that are hard to classify and comprehend (Beale 1984; Gordon and Richardson 1997; Lewis 1995). An evolving urban form now exists, spurring a flurry of new terms and categories that all fail in some way to capture the total picture (Fishman 1990; Lang,

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<sup>1</sup> John Kasarda (1985) made a similar point over a decade ago when he suggested that cities should target households pursuing nontraditional lifestyles. Kasarda offers a non-family values approach to urban redevelopment.

Danielsen, and Popper 1995; Sharpe and Walloch 1994). Concepts such as “metropolitan area” and “urbanized area” are defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for data-gathering purposes.<sup>2</sup> The Census Bureau uses these terms to classify the nation’s civil divisions and delineate metropolitan from rural areas.<sup>3</sup> Thus, suburbs form a subset of metropolitan areas. There remains no standard designation for suburbs (Baldassare 1992; Hughes 1993). Instead, they are defined only in relation to a “central city.” Suburbs are those parts of metropolitan areas “outside central cities.” Most metropolitan areas contain just one central city, with all remaining municipalities grouped as suburban (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990).<sup>4</sup>

Although widely used, the Census Bureau’s typology is hardly definitive (Fitzsimmons and Forstall 1993). For one thing, the categories of central city and suburb do not fully correlate with population density, as one might expect. Regional variations in the size and structure of central cities account for much of the discrepancy. Sunbelt cities often include both urban cores (many of which are not even high density) and low-density residential subdivisions within their large expanses. Northeastern and Midwestern cities, by contrast, are mostly smaller, denser, and encircled by rings of politically separate urbanized suburbs (Jackson 1985; Rusk 1993). Under the Census Bureau’s scheme, inhabitants of high-rise buildings in tightly packed Union City, NJ, are suburbanites, while those living in single-family homes in Los Angeles’s sprawling San Fernando Valley count as urban dwellers.<sup>5</sup>

The Census Bureau recently tried to improve the accuracy of its central-city designation by systematically adding suburbs that are major employment and population centers (Office of

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<sup>2</sup> “Metropolitan areas” must have a central place with a minimum of 50,000 people or exceed a population of 100,000 over a contiguous “urbanized area.” The Census Bureau defines “urbanized area” as comprising a contiguous space having a density of at least 1,000 people per square mile and totaling at minimum 50,000 people (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990).

<sup>3</sup> The U.S. government still grapples with these definitions. A recent U.S. Department of Agriculture report proposes that metropolitan areas be determined by geographic units smaller than the current county method. The report suggests using census tracts, which would significantly expand the recorded amount of rural land (Cromartie and Swanson 1996).

<sup>4</sup> Generally a metropolitan area’s largest city and, in some cases, up to two additional cities are labeled “central city.”

<sup>5</sup> Union City contains 44,043 people per square mile, nearly six times more than Los Angeles’s 7,436 density figure (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1994).

Management and Budget 1996). For example, the census now includes Irvine, CA, as a central city in the Los Angeles consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CMSA). However, the lack of connection between population density and places defined as urban and suburban largely persists.

Claritas solves the urban/suburban definitional dilemma by ignoring political units and focusing instead on population density. By dividing the entire United States into more than 900,000 cells, each measuring approximately four square miles, Claritas computes density at the local level.<sup>6</sup> Cells rank from low to high, based on population, and convert to percentile scores running from 0 to 99. Each percentile represents about 2.5 million people. A density score of 85 (or 5,388–5,683 people per square mile) serves as the urban baseline in the nation's large metropolitan areas (Miller and Hodges 1994). To Claritas, Union City is urban, while Los Angeles's San Fernando Valley is suburban.

Thousands of cells with density scores of 85 or higher fall outside central cities, yet residents there are classified as suburban by the Census Bureau. These places house America's suburban urbanites, who live in central-city-type neighborhoods. The fact that Claritas's geographic units of analysis vary from the Census Bureau's is a benefit to public policy makers (Miller and Hodges 1994). It provides them with a chance to gauge two urban populations: an official one and an actual one. The policy implications of knowing about these populations are important.

Because they pursue essentially urban lifestyles, suburban urbanites form the group most likely to relocate to central cities. Research on locational choice shows that current urban residence strongly predicts future urban residence (Spain 1989). This evidence suggests that non-central-city dwellers with urban lifestyles would be amenable to central cities. Life cycle, household composition, and education are also demographic variables that determine preferences for urban living (Varady 1990). For instance, younger, educated singles and childless couples often prefer cities and higher-density shelter (Kasarda 1985).

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<sup>6</sup> Claritas can calculate density at many levels, including, for example, census tracts, which on average contain about 1,500 households. Claritas can also drill down to the ZIP+4 level, which typically includes about 10 households. For the purposes of this exploratory study, we use census tract data. If a city were to conduct a more fine-grained market study, it would likely find block groups (an average of 400 households) and blocks (an average of 30 households) the most useful geographic units of analysis.

A common concern expressed among urban mayors is that the quality of their city services, especially schools, stacks up poorly against that of most suburbs. Improving public education is often cited as the key to attracting suburbanites to cities (Varady and Raffel 1995). Enhancing school quality is indeed an important element in any urban revitalization effort, but it may be less critical than is commonly assumed. Consider that households made up of married couples with children accounted for only a quarter of the nation's total in 1995, down from 4 in 10 households in 1970 (Vobejda 1996).<sup>7</sup>

Changes in lifestyle and life cycle, including later marriages, fewer children per family, gay couples, childless marriages, nonmarried couples and singles, and more "empty-nest" years for couples with grown children, have made so-called nontraditional childless households the norm. These household demographics enable cities to develop a strategy of attracting suburbanites that is more comprehensive than simply improving schools. In fact, the taxes generated by attracting childless households to the city can be used to improve school quality for families with children without adding any additional burden on school systems. Those who study housing impact find that the combination eases pressure on municipal budgets (Burchell and Listokin 1991).

There is growing anecdotal evidence that some empty-nest couples in their 50s are relocating into cities. These are often couples who lived in cities prior to having children and then moved to the suburbs for space, safety, and schools. From interviews around the nation, it appears that they are returning to cities to pursue an urban lifestyle (El Nasser 1996). According to Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies (1996), the number of empty-nest households will grow significantly in the next decade:

Today, the older baby-boom households are set to move into the "empty-nest" stage of the life cycle when they no longer have minor children living at home. The number of married households without minor children will therefore grow at an increasingly rapid rate to become the fastest growing family type by the year 2000. By 2010, 36 million households—slightly less than a third of the total—will be empty nesters. (p. 6)

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<sup>7</sup> The Census Bureau defines a household as an individual or group of people who occupy a housing unit.

Despite favorable household demographics such as the growing number of empty-nest households, city living is still not for everyone. If anything, cities are losing their appeal. For example, in 1991 a random sample of Americans were asked, “If you could live anywhere in the United States, where would you prefer to live?” Just 13 percent answered “the city.” The figure stood at 18 percent in 1970 (“Community’s Pulse” 1996). This marked drop points to the challenge that cities face as they try to retain and attract residents. Now, perhaps more than ever, cities need to know which Americans want to live in them and how their vision of urban life may be accommodated by public policy.

Claritas differentiates citiphiles from citiphobes by linking demographic variables to population density, thus providing a fuller picture of who is truly urban. It finds that, even when controlling for age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, population density—in and of itself—still accounts for significant differences in lifestyle as reflected in consumer patterns. A distinct “density effect” separates central-city dwellers and suburban urbanites from other consumers (Larson 1993).<sup>8</sup> Since Claritas measures this effect independently of civil divisions, millions of census-defined suburbanites emerge as urban.

### *Claritas urban lifestyle clusters*

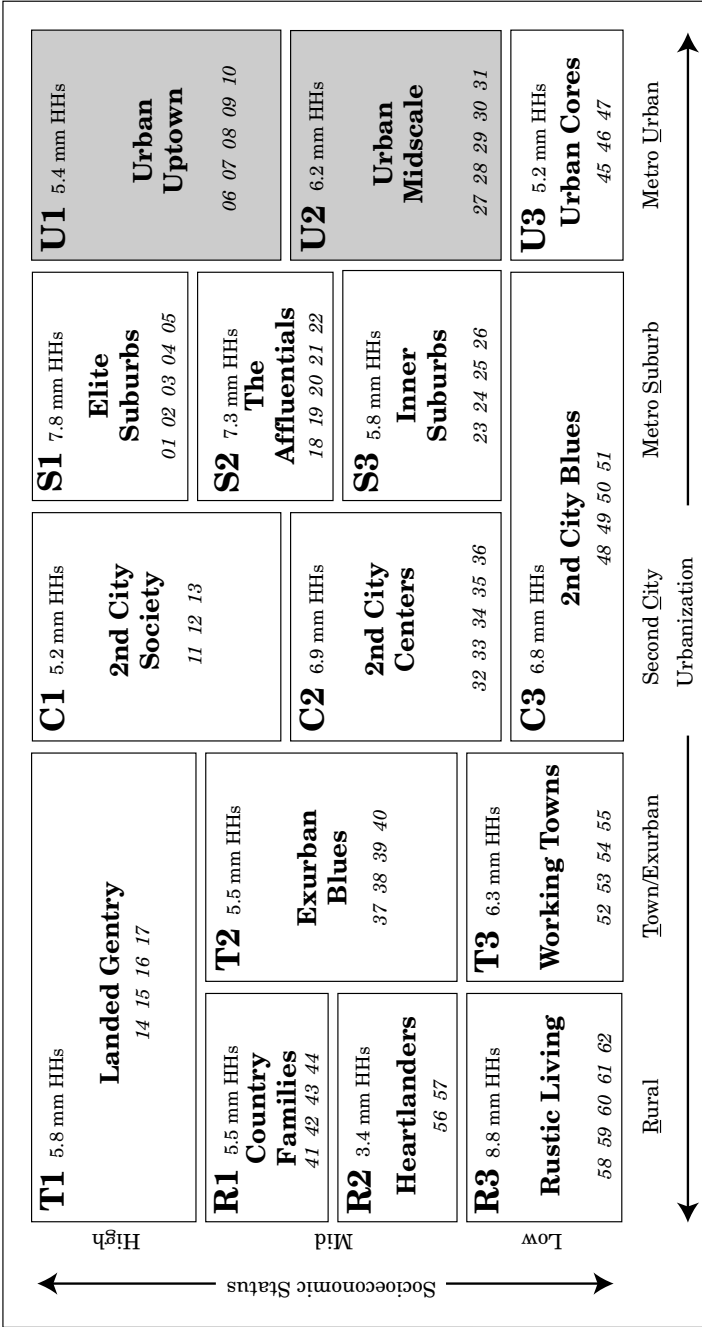
Claritas uses geodemography, which joins demographic data and local geography (e.g., census blocks and tracks), to classify every American neighborhood. Fifteen social groups result from plotting three socioeconomic statuses (low, medium, and high) against five population density types (rural, town/exurban, second—or edge—city, metro suburb, and metro urban; see figure 1).

Social groups roughly classify persons by location and income. These groups further segment into 62 more precisely defined “lifestyle clusters,” ranging from 0.5 to 2.8 percent of the nation’s population. Lifestyle clusters are derived by matching demographics to consumption patterns. People ultimately fall into

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<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, this finding helps resolve a long-running debate in urban sociology. For decades, urban sociologists have argued that an “ecological effect,” connected to population density, distinguishes city dwellers from others. Many urban sociologists see population density as an independent variable that affects such dependent variables as lifestyle and subcultural identity (Fischer 1975; Karp, Stone, and Yoels 1991; Wirth 1938).

Figure 1. Claritas Cluster and Social Group Matrix



Source: Based on the Claritas Inc. PRIZM® System. Used with permission.

Note: Claritas divides America's population into 62 clusters across 15 social groups. This article looks at the 10 clusters found in social groups U1 (Urban Uptown) and U2 (Urban Midscale), which are shaded. These clusters are designated on this diagram by number as 6-10 and 27-31. In the tables that follow, these clusters are known by their respective Claritas nicknames (Urban Gold Coast, Young Literati, Bohemian Mix, etc.). mm HHs = millions of households.

a lifestyle cluster based on what they buy. Subscribe to the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's*, and you could wind up tagged by Claritas as one of the Young Literati.

To reach this breakdown, Claritas employs factor analysis, an inductive, multivariate statistical method that reduces unwieldy databases into several correlated group measures.<sup>9</sup> Sifting through hundreds of variables, Claritas found six factors that explain 90 percent of neighborhood variance.<sup>10</sup> Cluster analysis of these factors using consumer behavior data, or what Claritas terms the PRIZM® System, in turn generates the 62 neighborhood lifestyle types.<sup>11</sup> This lifestyle typology, linked to a density-defined concept of place, is what Claritas is selling. The proprietary consumer data that Claritas includes in the package, obtained in large measure by swapping information services with firms such as Visa, are the other key element of its product.<sup>12</sup>

America's major metropolitan areas contain 10 urban middle-class to affluent lifestyle clusters, falling into two social groups of five clusters each. Keep in mind that many of these clusters, in varying degrees, also appear in what are technically suburbs (Union City, NJ, Alexandria, VA, etc.). Table 1 summarizes these social groups and lifestyle clusters. The affluent social group (the Urban Uptowners) primarily lives (94 percent) in America's 10 largest regions and shows a clear preference for big cities, or those with more than half a million residents. Urban Uptowners comprise the nation's second most affluent social group, following wealthy suburbanites. Urban Uptowners mainly work as executives and professionals in business, finance, entertainment, and education. They have diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds and are mostly young and childless. Collectively, Urban Uptowners represent nearly 6 percent of all Americans and five

<sup>9</sup> This is also known as "social area analysis," an urban studies method employing factor analysis with a rich academic history that reached a peak in the early 1970s (Hughes 1973; Palm 1973).

<sup>10</sup> The factors Claritas identified, in order of variance explained, are social rank (e.g., income, education), household (e.g., age, size), mobility (e.g., length of residence), ethnicity (e.g., race, foreign versus U.S. born), urbanization (e.g., population/housing density), and housing (e.g., owner/renter status, home values) (Claritas 1994a, 1994b).

<sup>11</sup> The term PRIZM® originated as an acronym for Potential Rating Index for Zip Markets. Due to a methods shift, PRIZM® now only applies metaphorically to niched marketing, as in a prism that segments light.

<sup>12</sup> For a popular account of how Claritas develops lifestyle clusters, see Weiss (1988).

*Table 1. Claritas Inc.'s Middle-Class and Affluent Urbanites' Prevalent Demographic Characteristics by Social Groups and Lifestyle Clusters*

Social Group/ Lifestyle Cluster	Income Level <sup>a</sup>	Family Type <sup>b</sup>	Age Range	Education <sup>c</sup>	Occupation <sup>d</sup>	Prevalent Housing Type <sup>e</sup>	Prevalent Race/ Ethnicity
Urban Uptown							
Urban Gold Coast	Affluent	Singles	25-34/55+	College	Executive	Hi-Rise	White
Money & Brains	Affluent	Couples	55-64	College	Executive	Single	White
Young Literati	Upper Mid	Sgl/Cpl	25-34	College	Executive	Hi-Rise	Diverse
American Dreams	Upper Mid	Family	35-54	College	WC	Single	Diverse
Bohemian Mix	Middle	Singles	<35	College	WC	Hi-Rise	Diverse
Urban Midscale							
Urban Achievers	Middle	Sgl/Cpl	Mix	College	WC/Exec	Hi-Rise	White
Big City Blend	Middle	Family	35-54	HS	WC/BC	Single	Hispanic
Old Yankee Rows	Middle	Couples	55+	HS	WC	Multi	Diverse
Mid-City Mix	Middle	Fam/Cpl	35-54	HS/College	WC/Serv	Multi	Black
Latino America	Middle	Family	25-34	<HS	BC/Serv	Multi	Hispanic

Source: Claritas Inc. PRIZM® System. Used with permission.

<sup>a</sup> Affluent = an average annual household income of \$50,000-\$64,500; Upper Mid = \$37,000-\$49,500; Middle = \$28,000-\$36,500.

<sup>b</sup> Family = married couples with children or single parents with children; Couples = married couples (few children); Singles = singles/unmarried couples; Fam/Cpl = mix of married couples with or without children; Sgl/Cpl = mix of married couples and singles.

<sup>c</sup> College = college graduates; HS/College = high school/some college; HS = high school/technical school; <HS = grade school/junior high school.

<sup>d</sup> Executive = executive, managerial, and professional (teachers, doctors); WC = other white collar (technical, sales, administrative/clerical support); WC/Exec = mix of other white collar and executive; BC = blue collar (assembly, trades, repair, operators, laborers); WC/BC = mix of white collar and upper-level blue collar; Serv = service (hospitality, food preparation, protective and health services); WC/Serv = mix of other white collar and service; BC/Serv = mix of blue collar and service.

<sup>e</sup> Single = mostly single-family detached units (SFDUs), some townhouses or duplexes; Multi = townhomes, garden-style condominiums/apartments, some SFDUs; Hi-Rise = mid-rise/high-rise, 10+ unit condominiums/apartments, duplexes.

neighborhood lifestyle clusters. The Urban Gold Coast forms the richest one, comprised mostly of singles who live at the nation's highest density. Money & Brains neighborhoods follow, containing mostly dual-income couples with relatively few children and epicurean tastes. The most educated Americans, or Young Literati, often live near private urban universities. American Dreams, the only family-oriented Urban Uptown neighborhood type, includes many established immigrants who work in trade and public service. Finally, Bohemian Mix areas make up an integrated, singles-dominated, highly educated, high-rise hodgepodge of executives, students, artists, and writers.

Claritas's middle-income city residents form an "Urban Mid-scale" social group. Like Urban Uptowners, people in this group are concentrated in the big cities of large regions, with 96 percent living in the top 25 metropolitan areas. Urban Midscale areas share high population densities, ethnic diversity, and high use of public transportation. Together they account for nearly 7 percent of all Americans.

Urban Achievers, the most affluent midscale cluster, are mostly educated, white-collar couples. Predominantly Hispanic Big City Blend neighborhoods feature blue- and white-collar workers who have families and are living mostly in detached houses. Old Yankee Rows clusters include both white empty-nest families and single immigrants from Latin America and Asia. At the fringe of many large cities, Mid-City Mix neighborhoods house a mainly African-American population of both couples and families. Finally, Latino America clusters lead the nation in foreign-born immigrants who live in large households with large families.

## **Case study**

### *Why Washington?*

Metropolitan Washington, DC, provides a good test for how the target marketing of suburban urbanites works on a large regional scale. The city lies in the part of America that best matches Claritas's definition for urbanization. As the southern terminus of the Northeast Corridor, the metropolitan region shares a pattern of high-density suburbia with Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. Thus, despite serving as the nation's capital, Washington resembles a typical Northeastern metropolis in many other respects, especially spatial structure.

With nearly five million residents, Washington ranks as America's seventh largest metropolitan area, just behind Boston and just ahead of Dallas and Detroit.<sup>13</sup> Washington therefore supports many Urban Uptowners. Washington is also America's most affluent metropolitan area, even ahead of such close competitors as San Francisco, Boston, and New York. Washington's large African-American community and waves of recent immigrants from all over the world create a microcosm of the nation's increasingly diverse metropolitan population.

Government employment dominates the District of Columbia's economy, followed by a host of ancillary services such as national trade and professional associations. The downtown ranks third in private office space behind New York and Chicago (Hughes, Miller, and Lang 1992). The District is home to several major universities and supports a large intellectual and arts community. In sum, Washington features cosmopolitan economic and lifestyle patterns that make it a likely candidate to attract both middle-income and affluent suburban urbanites.

### *Urbanized areas of Washington, DC*

Metropolitan Washington has a Claritas-defined urban core roughly twice the size of the District alone. While slightly smaller in size than its suburban-urbanized fringe, the District maintains an edge in population due to a higher overall density. More than half the total land area within the Washington Beltway qualifies as urban, according to Claritas. The District itself accounts for only about a quarter of the total space within the Beltway.

Washington, DC, reaches a peak density score of 94 (10,469–12,046 people per square mile) near its geographic center in Northwest, east of Rock Creek Park.<sup>14</sup> Residential areas such as

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<sup>13</sup> The rank is based on Washington's market size, as defined by Arbitron's Areas of Dominant Influence. According to Arbitron, metropolitan Washington in 1990 had 4,911,420 residents with a median household income of \$50,424 and a median home value of \$165,118 (Weiss 1994). Because it uses marketing data, Claritas selected a marketer's definition of the region. Metropolitan Washington was recently combined with Baltimore to form the Washington-Baltimore, DC-MD-VA-WV CMSA (Office of Management and Budget 1996). The consolidated region now contains the following central cities: Annapolis, MD; Arlington, VA; Baltimore, MD; Frederick, MD; Fredericksburg, VA; Hagerstown, MD; and Washington, DC.

<sup>14</sup> Large parts of Manhattan, such as the Upper West Side, reach Claritas's highest density score of 99, or 39,402–50,983 people per square mile.

Dupont Circle, Logan Circle, Columbia Heights, and Adams Morgan are among the District's most crowded neighborhoods. Washington's museum, monument, and government sections are less dense because they often lack housing and generally maintain large public open spaces. Parts of far Northwest Washington, built on the bluffs overlooking the Potomac River, form the District's only large-scale, Claritas-defined suburban neighborhoods.

Every county bordering Washington contains some Claritas-defined urbanized area. In Maryland, places like Takoma Park in Montgomery County and Chillum in Prince George's County maintain density scores of between 90 and 92 (7,291–9,315 people per square mile). Urbanization even spreads along and past the Beltway north of the District for a few miles. In Virginia, much of Arlington County is urban.<sup>15</sup> Most of the independent city of Alexandria, VA, is urban as well. Fairfax County's urban areas border Arlington and Alexandria.

### *Data*

Tables 2 and 3 display metropolitan Washington's population and households by urban social groups and lifestyle clusters, both inside and outside the District. Note that not all of Claritas's urban groups appear here. The poorest, Urban Cores, do not fall within the scope of this study. They do, however, account for a significant percentage of the District's total population and households. Neighborhood lifestyle clusters are assigned according to census tract. The Washington region totals 2,817 census tracts, a fifth of which lie in the District. Nine in 10 (or 524) of the District's 576 census tracts classify as urban.

Table 2, focusing on population, shows that middle-income and affluent urbanites account for almost 1 in 6 (or 843,173) residents of metropolitan Washington, compared with a national average of about 1 in 8. More than 6 in 10 (or 386,720) of Washington's 609,909 citizens fall into the same category. Over half a million (523,801) Urban Uptowners live in the Washington region. The figure surpasses the number of Urban Midscalers (319,372) by more than 200,000. In total, the District accounts for nearly half (45.9 percent) of metropolitan Washington's middle-income and affluent urbanites. This quadruples its

<sup>15</sup> According to the Census Bureau, all of Arlington County is technically a central city. This was true even before the consolidation of the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan areas (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988).

*Table 2. Metropolitan Washington, DC, 1990 Population by Urban Social Groups and Lifestyle Clusters Inside and Outside the District of Columbia*

Social Group/ Lifestyle Cluster	1990 Population Inside DC	Population Percent Inside DC	1990 Population Outside DC	Population Percent Outside DC	Cumulative Metro Population	Total Census Tracts
Urban Uptown	228,250	43.6	295,551	56.4	523,801	471
Urban Gold Coast	32,428	51.3	30,792	48.7	63,220	48
Money & Brains	39,750	34.3	76,035	65.7	115,785	154
Young Literati	61,392	44.3	77,302	55.7	138,694	119
American Dreams	14,815	20.5	57,475	79.5	72,290	63
Bohemian Mix	79,865	59.7	53,947	40.3	133,812	87
Urban Midscale	158,470	49.6	160,902	50.4	319,372	231
Urban Achievers	23,201	44.4	29,003	55.6	52,204	43
Big City Blend	0	0.0	3,567	100.0	3,567	3
Old Yankee Rows	7,381	23.2	24,452	76.8	31,833	15
Mid-City Mix	127,888	56.5	98,501	43.5	226,389	166
Latino America	0	0.0	5,379	100.0	5,379	4
Urban social group	386,720	45.9	456,453	54.1	843,173	702
Area total	609,909	12.4	4,301,493	87.6	4,911,402	2,817

*Source:* Based on the Claritas Inc. PRIZM® System. Used with permission.

*Table 3. Metropolitan Washington, DC, 1990 Households by Urban Social Groups and Lifestyle Clusters Inside and Outside the District of Columbia*

Social Group/ Lifestyle Cluster	1990 Households Inside DC	Households Percent Inside DC	1990 Households Outside DC	Households Percent Outside DC	Cumulative Metro Households	Total Census Tracts
Urban Uptown	108,908	40.6	159,187	59.4	268,095	471
Urban Gold Coast	20,616	53.3	18,095	46.7	38,711	48
Money & Brains	14,511	33.5	28,832	66.5	43,343	154
Young Literati	25,046	39.6	38,237	60.4	63,283	119
American Dreams	4,752	15.1	26,669	84.9	31,421	63
Bohemian Mix	43,983	48.2	47,354	51.8	91,337	87
Urban Midscale	58,482	48.5	61,978	51.5	120,460	231
Urban Achievers	8,909	42.1	12,246	57.9	21,155	43
Big City Blend	0	0.0	922	100.0	922	3
Old Yankee Rows	2,792	21.7	10,046	78.3	12,838	15
Mid-City Mix	46,781	55.6	37,294	44.4	84,075	166
Latino America	0	0.0	1,470	100.0	1,470	4
Urban social group	167,390	43.1	221,165	56.9	388,555	702

*Source:* Based on the Claritas Inc. PRIZM® System. Used with permission.

percentage population figure (12.4 percent) for the region as a whole.

A majority of Washington's middle-class and affluent urbanites live outside the District. This is especially true of Urban Uptowners, of whom nearly 300,000 reside outside of Washington. Money & Brains and Young Literati make up the largest non-District lifestyle clusters, together accounting for over half of all non-District Urban Uptowners. Eight in 10 residents of American Dreams neighborhoods classify as suburban urbanites, proportionally making them the largest Urban Uptown cluster not living in Washington proper.

The District maintains an edge in 2 of 5 Urban Uptown lifestyle clusters. A slim majority of Urban Gold Coasters, Claritas's richest urbanites, live in the District. A larger percentage, nearly 6 in 10, of Bohemian Mix residents make Washington their home. A third of all District Urban Uptowners dwell in Bohemian Mix neighborhoods.

As shown in table 2, one lifestyle cluster dominates the Urban Midscale social group. Seven in 10 Urban Midscalers in the metropolitan area live in Mid-City Mix neighborhoods. An even higher concentration, or 4 in 5, of midscale Washingtonians call these areas home. Big City Blend and Latino America clusters together contain fewer than 9,000 people, none of whom resides in the District. The two other clusters, Urban Achievers and Old Yankee Rows, live more often outside the District. This is especially true for Old Yankee Rows.

Table 3 presents metropolitan Washington's 1990 households by urban social group and lifestyle cluster. The gap between Urban Uptown households inside and outside the District is even greater than for residents shown in table 2. Six in 10 of these households appear in urban areas outside Washington. By comparison, population and household figures for the Urban Midscale social group are fairly consistent.

The larger edge in the total number of households relative to population means that Urban Uptown households are larger in Washington, as is shown in table 4.

Three clusters, Young Literati, American Dreams, and Bohemian Mix, lead this trend of smaller non-District households. American Dreams neighborhoods drop from just over three people per household in the District to just over two outside Washington. A corresponding but smaller shift occurs in Bohemian Mix areas,

*Table 4. Metropolitan Washington, DC, 1990 People per Household by Urban Social Groups and Lifestyle Clusters Inside and Outside the District of Columbia*

Social Group/ Lifestyle Cluster	1990		1990		1990		1990		Regional	
	Households Inside DC	People/HH Inside DC	Households Outside DC	People/HH Outside DC	Households Outside DC	People/HH Outside DC	Households	People per Household	Households	People per Household
Urban Uptown	108,908	2.10	159,187	1.86	268,095	1.95				
Urban Gold Coast	20,616	1.57	18,095	1.70	38,711	1.63				
Money & Brains	14,511	2.74	28,832	2.64	43,343	2.67				
Young Literati	25,046	2.45	38,237	2.02	63,283	2.19				
American Dreams	4,752	3.12	26,669	2.16	31,421	2.30				
Bohemian Mix	43,983	1.82	47,354	1.14	91,337	1.47				
Urban Midscale	58,482	2.71	61,978	2.60	120,460	2.65				
Urban Achievers	8,909	2.60	12,246	2.37	21,155	2.47				
Big City Blend	0	0.00	922	3.87	922	3.87				
Old Yankee Rows	2,792	2.64	10,046	2.43	12,838	2.48				
Mid-City Mix	46,781	2.73	37,294	2.64	84,075	2.69				
Latino America	0	0.00	1,470	3.66	1,470	3.66				
Urban social group	167,390	2.31	221,165	2.06	388,555	2.17				

Source: Based on the Claritas Inc. PRIZM® System. Used with permission.

Note: HH = households.

as they decline from nearly two per household inside Washington to slightly more than one outside. Young Literati households lose even less, dropping from around two-and-a-half people to two per housing unit. Small household size among upper-middle-class families correlates with high-density living. Thus, the findings in table 2 illustrate the truly urban character of the neighborhoods surrounding Washington.

### *Discussion*

The findings demonstrate the potential for target marketing as a policy tool, but an actual planning study would require a good deal more detail than this exploratory effort. The Claritas database contains extensive housing statistics, including building type (e.g., single versus multifamily), ownership (e.g., owner versus renter), and even mortgage information. Housing consumption may be cross-referenced with other consumer and geodemographic patterns to get a complete market picture. Yet even from the brief case study offered here, patterns in the data emerge with clear practical implications.

Washington's out-migration accelerated during the 1990s. In just the five years from 1990 to 1995, the District experienced a net loss of 50,000 residents. Household composition is also shifting. In 1980, nearly 4 in 10 District households contained children. By 1990, the figure dipped to 1 in 5. Households with children are leaving the city, while those without children remain (Washington, DC, Board of Education 1996). The city is also youthful. A quarter of all District adults are 18- to 29-year-old singles (Cohn 1997).

These demographic trends favor a strategy of marketing the District to couples and singles as a place to work and play. Washington's nearly half-million middle-income and affluent suburban urbanites represent a large pool of potential big-city dwellers, as do other suburbanites from around the nation. Claritas's segmentation of these individuals into 10 lifestyle clusters reveals who among them may be the most targetable.

Washington's suburban Bohemian Mix residents seem a likely group to be lured into the District. Bohemians show little interest in suburban middle-class propriety and instead seek alternative lifestyles that are best accommodated in the nation's largest cities. Their ethnic diversity matches and strengthens Washington's increasingly polyglot population. Given their age, background, worldview, and elevated tolerance for the potential

incivilities of urban life, Bohemian Mixers are the best candidates to live in Washington's transitional and low-income neighborhoods.

The Bohemian Mix household structure also favors cities. This is especially true for Washington's suburban urbanites. Non-District Bohemian Mix neighborhoods maintain just over one person per household; in short, most are single. Those moving into the District would therefore worry little about school quality, for example. Nightlife, of which the city has plenty, would be a more probable concern. Bohemian Mixers now living outside Washington frequent the city's restaurants, coffeehouses, bookstores, and clubs. Living in the District would in many ways make their lives more convenient. The number of non-District Bohemian Mix households approaches 50,000, the most for any cluster outside Washington.

Young Literati constitute another citiphile lifestyle cluster. They are essentially more upscale, better-educated, and somewhat less diverse Bohemian Mixers. The city serves as an intellectual community for their networking and socializing. Young Literati typically live in multiunit housing such as apartments or condos. Most remain single or are childless couples, and even those with children tend to have only one child. Single-child, adult-centered families often prove more willing to relocate to a central city than large, child-oriented families do.

In the Washington region, Young Literati neighborhoods outside the District average just two people per household. The demographics favor a big-city relocation. Young Literati often live in high-rise apartments, so many parts of the District would appeal to them. Given their liberal views and acceptance of diversity, according to Claritas's survey findings, Young Literati could also make the District's transitional neighborhoods, such as those around the Capitol, their home. Nearly 40,000 Young Literati households appear outside the District, making them by unit the second largest urban lifestyle cluster living outside Washington.

Urban Gold Coast and Money & Brains, the two most affluent Urban Uptown clusters, share an affinity for big cities. Washington's Urban Gold Coast suburban urbanites seem the more probable of the two to relocate to the District. They maintain fewer than two people per household on average, one person fewer than Money & Brains. Urban Gold Coasters are also mostly younger and show a clear preference for high-density urban housing. Yet some Money & Brains households may be

willing to relocate to Washington, given that they are typically composed of empty-nest couples—a group beginning to show a desire for city living.

Over half the region's Urban Gold Coasters now live in Washington. Nationally, Urban Gold Coast neighborhoods feature the greatest concentration of singles in multiunit, high-rise buildings, the lowest incidence of auto ownership, and the fewest children of any cluster. All three of these factors give Washington a level playing field with, if not an advantage over, its suburbs in attracting Urban Gold Coasters. Given their wealth, Urban Gold Coasters prefer already gentrified areas.

Of all Urban Uptown clusters, American Dreams seem to be the hardest sell. These immigrant families choose cities mostly because of ethnic and racial identity rather than lifestyle. Their high residential stability makes them less responsive to policy initiatives that promote relocation. In metropolitan Washington, only 1 in 5 American Dreams residents lives in the District. They also prefer single-family housing, which limits their options inside the District. The small household size of non-District residents (about two per unit) offers the only positive evidence that at least some mobile American Dreams singles and couples may be willing to move inside Washington.

Metropolitan Washington's only Urban Midscale lifestyle clusters worth targeting are Urban Achievers, Old Yankee Rows, and Mid-City Mix. The other two are simply too small to consider. Mid-City Mix residents account for most of the region's Urban Midscale households, particularly those within the District. Mid-City Mixers typically dwell in urban row houses at the city's edge. Many in metropolitan Washington reside in neighborhoods along the District's border with Prince George's County, MD, both inside and outside the District. Moving over the District line into Washington would barely alter their lives, which constitutes both a marketing opportunity and a challenge. Non-District Urban Achievers and Old Yankee Rows have about the same number of households and household sizes. Of the two, Urban Achievers appear more targetable. They are younger and prefer big-city, high-rise housing.

### **Target marketing as an analytic and statistical tool**

Target marketing aids analysts by enhancing the statistics traditionally used in policy making. Government data sources, such as the census, simply do not have the resources or mandate

to develop lifestyle typologies that predict consumer behavior. Yet predicting behavior lies at the heart of many policy initiatives. Big cities interested in attracting suburbanites should target segments of the population most interested in, or already leading, urban lifestyles. Central cities must identify market niches in which they already have a market advantage (Kasarda 1985; Varady 1990). Only target marketers provide that kind of information.

Target marketers incorporate census data as they develop their proprietary schemes. In this way, they complement the government's own data. Researchers may therefore contrast different methods—public and private—knowing they ultimately derive from the same source. The Claritas definitions of urban dwellers provide a case in point. The discrepancy between its geographic units and the Census Bureau's reveals a new demographic category, suburban urbanite, that otherwise does not exist in the data.

The use of target marketing data also has a downside. Unlike the government, marketers charge for their information. Depending on the size and scope of the project, this resource could become quite expensive, potentially costing tens of thousands of dollars per study. The decision to use marketing statistics should be made on a case-by-case basis. Commissioning these services could at times prove cost-effective, even in an era of limited municipal resources. Marketers maintain extensive, ready-made databases that even include the mailing labels for those who are targeted.

Target marketing additionally includes some inherent data limitations that affect its workability as a policy tool. Despite the use of geodemographics, target marketing does not by itself provide clear insight into locational choice. For instance, it cannot specify why people decide to live where they do. Instead, marketers focus on the consumer tastes prevalent in particular neighborhoods. To work effectively, target marketing should be combined with locational research describing the push/pull factors that influence where people choose to reside. The mixing of methods facilitates a better understanding of how people with similar demographics (e.g., age, income, education, ethnicity) differ in residential choice based on lifestyle patterns.

It also is important to note that Claritas's data are contingent on the spatial structure of regions. Suburban urbanites are a phenomenon largely limited to metropolitan areas that have a modestly sized central city surrounded by high-density suburbs.

Regions throughout the nation, from Boston to San Francisco, meet this criterion. But many fast-developing Sunbelt cities of the Southwest show a very different development pattern. Claritas-defined suburbs dominate central cities such as Phoenix and Las Vegas.<sup>16</sup> Sunbelt cities thus reveal the presence of a new category of city dweller: the “urban suburbanite.”<sup>17</sup> Attracting urban suburbanites to Sunbelt cities means selling such places as suburban. The mainstream method of urban redevelopment, described earlier in this article, seeks to diminish city/suburban distinctions and thus works better in regions where suburbs are so prevalent that they penetrate the heart of the central city.

### Target marketing and public policy

No policy choice is value neutral—including the decision to use target marketing to attract affluent suburbanites to cities. Critics may charge that pursuing such a redevelopment strategy amounts to nothing more than a yuppie placement service. If poorly done, target marketing to suburban urbanites could appear to be a reverse Robin Hood program: taxing the poor to purchase the data that lead to their eventual displacement. Yet this need not occur. For one thing, most American cities are hardly on the verge of being overrun by middle-class suburbanites, regardless of the type of policies pursued.<sup>18</sup>

Still, many legitimate concerns exist that should be addressed before devising any program that targets suburban urbanites. Guidelines must be established to ensure that such programs do not create undue hardships for the current residents of targeted neighborhoods. A key element is using target marketing primarily for infill development. American cities contain numerous old industrial zones and abandoned warehouse districts, which often

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<sup>16</sup> Although Southwestern regions such as Las Vegas and Phoenix have a slight density difference between their center and edges, Claritas finds that population density falls off sharply between their suburbs and the surrounding rural areas. Thus, these regions, despite their relatively low-density cores, are urbanized islands in a sea of largely empty space (Lang, Popper, and Popper 1995, 1997).

<sup>17</sup> This is not to be confused with Varady and Raffel’s (1995) use of the term.

<sup>18</sup> For confirmation of this point, see Downs (1997) and Kasarda et al. (1997) in this issue of *Housing Policy Debate*. Also see Berry (1985), Bourne (1993), and Lemann (1997). For a critical discussion of the impact that returning middle-class suburbanites have on cities, see Smith (1979) and Feagin and Parker (1990).

lie just outside their downtown areas and are well suited for large-scale infill development.

Todd Zimmerman and Laurie Volk, development consultants who use target marketing data from Claritas, have analyzed just such a project for a former industrial site in Cincinnati, OH. The development, Adams Landing, is located along the Ohio River adjacent to downtown. Zimmerman and Volk argue that Adams Landing's lack of connection to any established neighborhood is actually an advantage. They see the development as an urban "blank slate" that has an opportunity to define itself "rather than being [held] hostage to the market perception" (Zimmerman and Volk 1996, 2).

Similar sites dot urban America.<sup>19</sup> In a region such as Portland, OR, where an urban growth boundary limits sprawl and demands a creative infill strategy, these sites thrive (Abbott 1997). Virtually the entire urban envelope that surrounds downtown Portland is now being redeveloped.

In Portland's Pearl District (named by developers in the 1970s), rows of warehouses are being converted into "rear-load," no-yard townhouses.<sup>20</sup> The townhouses typically feature three bedrooms and two-and-a-half baths and run about 2,000 square feet. Most units have a two-car carport in the rear alley in lieu of a small yard because developers assumed that the dual-income couples whom they targeted were more concerned with off-street parking than gardening. The development has proven successful, with the only surprise being the large number of empty nesters who bought homes, according to Todd R. Prendergast, Marketing Director of Realty Trust Associates in Portland (1996). Commenting on this trend in Portland, the Urban Land Institute finds that the empty nesters moving to converted warehouses in the Pearl District "have already owned homes and are eager for the reduced responsibilities inherent in condominium living" (Urban Land Institute 1996a, 289).

We propose that city governments, particularly their planning departments, become familiar with target marketing data and techniques, if only to ensure that they understand the full market potential for urban redevelopment. Builders of master-planned suburban communities often use the most advanced

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<sup>19</sup> On a cautionary note, much of this land exists as "brownfields," or places that require extensive environmental cleanup before new development is possible. For an overview of such sites, see Greenberg and Popper (1990).

<sup>20</sup> See Salant (1996) for a description of infill housing in the Washington region that fits this development model.

marketing information available, including target marketing. The packaging of communities is yet another area where suburbs have traditionally enjoyed an advantage over cities. Cities may now level this playing field by understanding and appropriately using target marketing.

With a combination of smart design and target marketing, urban infill development can help revitalize cities throughout the nation. Many American cities have plenty of room for more residents. For instance, Washington, DC, at one time contained almost twice its current population. The infrastructure supporting much of that population remains in place. Luring new residents to the city therefore can be achieved while minimizing the displacement of current residents.

The risk of displacement is often raised by critics of gentrification who view the return of middle-class suburbanites to cities as a zero-sum game (Marcuse 1986; Smith 1996). While the risk of displacement is real, we think that it is outweighed by the even greater risk of losing a chance to secure a larger middle-class tax base. Taxing new middle-class residents and spending the money on programs for a general urban population is a benefit that at least partially offsets the pain caused by displacement.

Interestingly, the rich data that come from target market studies may allow cities to channel the gentrification process in creative ways. Knowing the demographic and lifestyle details of neighborhood composition should give cities the capacity to fine-tune their redevelopment efforts. In this way, they may be able to get ahead of the market and direct gentrification to places where it is best accommodated, based on land use and existing lifestyles. Target marketing can help cities expand their already gentrified neighborhoods, while leaving stable working-class neighborhoods largely untouched. To the extent that working-class neighborhoods receive middle-income housing, target marketing data should enable planners and developers to situate such housing very precisely. Used correctly, target marketing could be an effective tool in transitioning to mixed-income neighborhoods.<sup>21</sup>

Beyond the benefits to central cities, infill development also slows the spread of urban sprawl (Ewing 1997). A diverse coalition of organizations—including architects and planners such as the Congress for the New Urbanism (Calthorpe 1993;

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<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of ways to overcome resistance to middle-income housing in low-income neighborhoods, see Varady and Raffel (1995), especially pages 174–202.

Katz 1994), financial institutions such as Bank of America (Fulton 1995), and environmentalists such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (Fitts and Holtzclaw 1996)—is advocating a halt to this pattern of growth.<sup>22</sup> The Urban Land Institute, for example, argues that the “wise reuse of infill parcels can minimize the consumption of agricultural land at the urban fringe and reduce the need for long commutes, automobile use, and fuel consumption by creating housing close to the central city and close to housing” (Suchman 1996, 4). Even Tony Downs (1994), one of the nation’s most sober students of the metropolis, regards halting sprawl as a national imperative.

Commenting on the shifting politics of sprawl in Portland in particular, and Western U.S. metropolitan areas in general, Robert Lang and Steven Hornburg (1997) find that

Portland also pursues an unintended, or at least unspoken, nonurban-urban policy that links the interest of middle-class residents throughout the region to the central city. Inhabitants of many western cities place a high premium on quality of life, often tied to the recreational opportunities offered by immediate access to mountains, deserts, and ocean.... Such individuals may come to see sprawling regional growth as a “crisis” in cases where it consumes the very places that they cherish. They may also prove willing to solve this crisis by accepting dense local development for the preservation of nearby open space.... The swap, in turn, requires the region to turn inward in quest of new development. Central-city land gains value as sites for infill projects. Suburbanites develop a stake in the central city as a revitalized urban core takes development pressure off the regional edge. The acceptance of compact urban form by suburbanites, for self-interested reasons, has the unintended effect of directing growth back to cities, just as Oregon’s attempt to save its farmland and open spaces had the unintended effect of saving its cities. (p. 6)<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> There are some notable critics of this view, such as Peter Gordon and Harry Richardson of the University of Southern California (1996, 1997). Some home builders and banks (Wells Fargo) have also joined to commission works that answer the opponents of sprawl. For example, see Hayward (1996). For a quick summary of the case for sprawl, see Black (1996).

<sup>23</sup> The trend is more typical of, but not limited to, the Western United States. For example, Maryland is on the verge of enacting an antisprawl “Smart

Cities may find themselves the beneficiaries of a growing concern over the loss of open space. As such, they should prepare for what may be a unique opportunity to accommodate redirected metropolitan growth. Target marketing helps cities rationally determine where their best prospects lie for new, middle-class-oriented development. Moreover, compact regional growth will expand suburban urbanite neighborhoods. Thus, even if cities miss much of the new inwardly directed growth in the next several years, they may benefit down the road by having larger markets of suburban urbanites from which to draw new residents. In either case, target marketing should play a key role in understanding how cities may come to exploit the inward development pressure that comes from limiting sprawl.

Target marketing may also be used as a planning tool in well-established urban neighborhoods, provided that sensitivity is shown to current residents. Neighborhoods with well-known and distinct reputations for supporting a particular lifestyle (for instance, Bohemian) may be strengthened by linking them to the suburban urbanites who share these habits and values.

Target marketing could also help retain the current quality of neighborhoods. For example, consider a case in which a major bookstore is about to leave a section of town that is home to many Young Literati. Given the centrality of such a service in the lives of the inhabitants, the loss could start a downward spiral that would ultimately endanger the identity of the neighborhood. Knowing this, a city government could intervene and broker a deal to ensure that commerce vital to community life (in this case a bookstore) is accommodated in any way possible.<sup>24</sup>

In fact, target marketing may prove an effective policy tool in developing neighborhood-based redevelopment strategies. Many local community groups justly complain that their interests are often overlooked as city officials focus on redeveloping the downtown area. Cities typically focus their marketing efforts on downtowns in the hope that the benefits generated by improving commerce will trickle out to surrounding neighborhoods. The

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Growth” program “designed to slow suburban sprawl by funneling billions of state dollars for roads, sewers, schools and other items to areas targeted for concentrated growth” (Neal and Montgomery 1997, A1).

<sup>24</sup> Saving a large bookstore in a Young Literati community is not a trivial concern. Full-service bookstores, which provide food and entertainment along with books, are now major social centers for young, educated urbanites (Roberts 1997).

method remains controversial.<sup>25</sup> Target marketing, with its microsegmentation, now enables cities to better understand neighborhood needs. It should prove far easier to sell a specific neighborhood to targeted suburbanites than an entire city to the broader region. With effective use of target marketing, downtowns may revitalize as commerce trickles *in* from newly revitalized neighborhoods.

Claritas shows the remarkable mosaic of income, race, and lifestyle that characterizes so much of urban America (it even reveals that wealth, along with poverty, is concentrated in cities). Its data give city planners the capability to understand more fully the market potential of their city's neighborhoods, including the less affluent ones.<sup>26</sup> In a world of overretailed, overmalled suburbia, central cities represent a still-emerging business opportunity (Porter 1995a; Woodyard 1997). Knowing urban neighborhoods, and their market needs, may help city officials pitch such places to retailers who might otherwise overlook them. As Michael Porter (1995b) notes,

The principal inner-city business opportunity springs, however, not from the size of the market but from its character. People in largely lower-income ethnic and minority communities have distinctive needs and tastes, which demand tailored products and services. But most companies design products and services for white middle-class consumers and businesses. Hence, their product configurations, retail concepts, entertainment, and personal and business services don't fit inner-city customers' needs. Microsegmentation lags in the inner city, but it represents a substantial opportunity. (p. 105)

Understanding target marketing gives city officials the capacity and the standing to aggressively sell their neighborhoods to retailers who might otherwise overlook an opportunity there.<sup>27</sup>

Target marketing applies to a number of policy areas directly pertaining to central cities. As illustrated here, it enables cities

<sup>25</sup> For example, see Squires (1989).

<sup>26</sup> There are several Claritas lifestyle clusters not covered in this article that may turn up in future research on drawing suburbanites to cities. For example, Single City Blues—lower-middle-class urbanites who are essentially downscale Bohemian Mixers—show an affinity for central cities.

<sup>27</sup> For details on the opportunities in urban retailing, see the Urban Land Institute's *Creating Tomorrow's Competitive Advantages* (1996b).

to identify quasi-urban markets for potential recruitment. Target marketing can also help cities retain current residents by better understanding and accommodating their urban lifestyles. The importance of previous urban residence as a predictor of future urban residence suggests that much effort should be given to retaining central-city households (Spain 1989).

Cities must also fully understand the suburbanites they target. Typical suburban urbanites willing to consider urban living nonetheless remain distinct from many city dwellers; that is why they live in the suburbs. For example, many middle-income suburban urbanites who relocate to central cities will expect to keep their cars and therefore may demand more off-street parking. In general, suburban urbanites could prove fastidious consumers of urban space. They may insist on higher standards of personal privacy and security than most urbanities. Attitudinally, suburban urbanites identify culturally with cities but are functionally inconvenienced by the daily problems of living in high density, such as having to fight for a parking space. Cities must address some of these concerns to attract and retain suburban urbanites.

Even those suburban urbanites who never relocate to central cities still maintain a higher stake in cities than other suburbanites. The lifestyle link between suburban urbanities and central-city dwellers described in this article has important implications for regional politics. Myron Orfield (1997) finds that regional political alliances, based on well-identified common interests, may be forged between cities and their low-income inner suburbs. Middle-income suburban urbanites could form similar alliances with the city. Their relatively high-density communities—while technically not cities—face many of the same urban problems that affluent city neighborhoods experience. Orfield's work is accompanied by a series of color maps showing how Minneapolis–St. Paul's social problems spill into an inner ring of suburbs. Claritas offers policy makers a different, though complementary, set of maps, which show that urban tastes and attitudes also extend into the inner ring of suburbs. The two sets of maps provide a powerful tool for any city seeking friends and allies in the suburbs.

Finally, targeting suburban urbanites, as with most urban revitalization strategies, is likely to be only marginally effective. Most suburban urbanites will stay put regardless of how well cities market themselves. But marginal gains are better than none at all. Cities should accept that they have lost much of their centrality to the region and now represent just one market

niche among many. Cities also must realize that it is far better to occupy a well-defined and defensible niche than to face near total irrelevance—a situation that all too often describes America's more desperate urban areas.

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