

Governing the Boomburbs: How Homeowners' Associations Make Sunbelt Growth Possible

Jennifer LeFurgy
Deputy Director
Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech
Alexandria, Virginia



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What I Will Cover Today

- What is a Boomburb
 - *Boomburbs: The Rise of America's Accidental Cities*, Brookings Press
- Boomburb vs. East Coast Governance
- Case Examples
 - North Las Vegas, NV
 - Chandler, AZ
 - Mesa, AZ



What is a Boomburb?

- Over 100,000 residents by 2000 Census
- Is NOT the largest city in its region: North Las Vegas versus Las Vegas
- Double-digit growth rates per decade since 1970
- Incorporated Place
- In 50 largest metropolitan areas as of 2000 Census

The 54 Boomburbs

Arizona: Chandler, Gilbert, Glendale, **Mesa**, Peoria, **Scottsdale**, **Tempe**

California: **Anaheim**, Chula Vista, Corona, **Costa Mesa**, Daly City, Escondido, Fontana, **Fremont**, **Fullerton**, **Irvine**, Lancaster, Moreno Valley, Oceanside, **Ontario**, **Orange**, **Oxnard**, Palmdale, Rancho Cucamonga, **Riverside**, **San Bernardino**, **Santa Ana**, Santa Clarita, **Santa Rosa**, Simi Valley, **Sunnyvale**, **Thousand Oaks**

Colorado: **Aurora**, Lakewood, Westminster

Florida: Coral Springs, Hialeah, Pembroke Pines, **Clearwater**

Nevada: Henderson, North Las Vegas

Texas: **Arlington**, **Carrollton**, Garland, Grand Prairie, **Irving**, Mesquite, **Plano**

Other States: **Naperville**, IL; **Salem**, OR; West Valley City, UT; Chesapeake, VA; **Bellevue**, WA

*principal city according to US Census



What is a Baby Boomburb?

- 50,000-100,000 residents by 2000 Census
- Double-digit growth rates since 1970
- Incorporated Place
- In 50 largest metropolitan areas as of 2000 Census



86 Baby Boomburbs...

- California: Antioch, Apple Valley, **Carlsbad**, **Chino**, **Cupertino**, Davis, **Fairfield**, **Folsom**, **Gardena**, **Hemet**, Hesperia, Laguna Niguel, Livermore, Lynwood, **Milpitas**, Mission Viejo, **Napa**, **Petaluma**, Pittsburg, **Pleasanton**, Rialto, **Roseville**, **San Marcos**, **Santa Cruz**, South Gate, **Tustin**, Union, **Vacaville**, Victorville, Vista, Yorba Linda
- Colorado: **Greeley**, Longmont, Thornton
- Florida: Boca Raton, Boynton Beach, Davie, **Deerfield Beach**, Del Ray Beach, Lauderhill, Margate, Miramar, North Miami, Plantation, Sunrise, Tamarac
- Georgia: Marietta, Roswell
- Illinois: **Elgin**, Orland Park, Palatine
- Maryland: **Frederick**, **Gaithersburg**
- Minnesota: Brooklyn Park, Burnesville, Coon Rapids, **Eagan**, **Eden Prairie**, Maple Grove, Plymouth



...More Baby Boomburbs

- Missouri: Lee's Summit, **St. Charles**, St. Peters
- Oklahoma: Edmond, Norman
- Oregon: **Beaverton**, Gresham, **Hillsboro**
- Texas: Denton, Flower Mound, Lewisville, Missouri, Round Rock, **Sugar Land**
- Utah: Layton, Sandy, West Jordan
- Washington: Federal Way, **Kent**, **Renton**
- Other States: **Cary**, NC; **Murfreesboro**, TN; Olathe, KS; Rochester Hills, MI; **Waukesha**, WI

A vertical photograph of several saguaro cacti against a clear blue sky. The cacti are tall and columnar with characteristic ribbing. One cactus in the foreground has a single arm starting to grow.

“Accidental” Cities

- Cities but run like small towns
 - The “town” of Gilbert, AZ
- Exit Ramp economies
- Have developed strategies to adapt to rapid growth
 - Products of the tax revolts
 - Private solutions relieve burden



Boomburb Mayors

- Most have part-time mayors and city managers
- Affluent volunteers
- Do not run under a party label



Boomburbs vs. Eastern US

- Bergen County, NJ
 - Strong municipal, weak county
 - Quality of service is dependent on each city's fiscal capacity
- Fairfax County, VA
 - Strong county, weak municipal
 - Quality of services is uniform



Boomburbs vs. Eastern US

- Boomburbs Model
 - Strong Counties, Strong Cities
 - Counties are large
 - Cities are incorporated
 - Large parcels of land
 - Yet offer light government



Non-Boomburb Growth Controls

- High property tax rates and expensive housing
- Schools are locally controlled
- Small scale, low population
- Homevoter Hypothesis
 - William Fischel, Dartmouth University



Homevoter in the Boomburbs

- Boomburbs are big, diverse, growing rapidly
- How to protect property values?
- Homeowners Associations probably maintain values and help alleviate growth strain

A vertical photograph of several tall saguaro cacti against a clear blue sky. The cacti are yellowish-brown and have a ribbed texture. They are positioned on the left side of the slide.

HOAs Relieve City Burdens

- Trash pick up
- Code enforcement
- Security
- Infrastructure
- Impact Fees
- More tax revenue, no new services

Two Forms of Help

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graph TD; A[Strong County] --> B[Boomburb]; C[Homeowners' Associations] --> B;
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Strong County

Boomburb

Homeowners'
Associations



North Las Vegas, NV

- Use Landscape Management Associations as well as HOAs
- Almost all post-1997 construction use HOAs
- Helping build part of Las Vegas beltway through Special Improvement District fees

A vertical photograph of several saguaro cacti against a clear blue sky. The cacti are tall and columnar with characteristic ribbing. One cactus in the foreground has a single arm starting to grow from its top.

Chandler, AZ

- Half fee simple, half HOA
- HOAs handle code enforcement
- Gives HOAs small grants
- Encourages HOAs in fee simple neighborhoods

A vertical photograph of several saguaro cacti against a clear blue sky. The cacti are tall and columnar with characteristic ribs and small arms. The image is positioned on the left side of the slide.

Mesa, AZ

- State shared revenue helps
- No direct taxes on real estate; uses sales taxes and impact fees
- School funding comes from county
- City leaders from HOAs



Potential Problems

- HOAs will run short on funds and fail
 - Absorbed by city
- HOAs dependent on state regulation, leaving cities unsure
- “Double Taxation”
- Lack of housing choices

More Information

- *Planning, April 2005*
 - James B. Goodno

www.mi.vt.edu