

**There are so many different circumstances among your suburbs, as you know.**

- High growth cities/low growth cities
- Suburbs on the favored quarter/unfavored quarters

**What are your assets?**

- Location, location, location: Half-way to Everywhere (to, not from) Shorter commute and travel times to everywhere
- Housing and land costs less than in the central city and/or the outer suburbs
- An urban feel and structure (urban is back in), and many prefer smaller urban areas if they are clean, safe and have interesting retail sections
- Historic areas and feel (only need to be 50 years old) and the 50s are back, as well as the 40s, 30s, and before
- Magnets for immigrant communities

**Strategies:**

- Mix housing and retail
  - Rebuild the retail strips with housing over retail
  - Live work like Parkwood.
- Create one or two charming retail districts, make retail concentrated, walkable, pedestrian friendly, and mix stores, restaurants, put in attractive infrastructure, parking on street and behind the buildings.
- Attract the stores of immigrant communities ? Asian, Latino, and African. Let them concentrate and create districts.
- Encourage first time homeownership ? focus on the Gen Y?ers
  - Tax credits or abatements for acquisition
  - Rehab loans and tax abatement or freezes for single family rehab
- Rental housing
  - For buildings with multiple code violations that have low rental rates, consider appointing trustees to take over, renovate with tenants in place and if need be, take the building and sell/give it to a nonprofit.
  - Inventory land city-owned land and sell/give it to developers (for profit/nonprofit) for rental housing (or condos or townhomes) on condition of ongoing affordability
  - Reduce parking requirements

### **Some strategies FTS can employ:**

- Housing Trust Funds ? funded from sales and/or transfer taxes, and commercial linkage fees where possible
- Create a Community Land Trust
- Inclusionary Zoning
- Consider policies that promote tenant acquisition of buildings, such as a tenant right to purchase on sale, supported with city funded counseling and financing
- Work with your housing authority to do HOPE VI-like redevelopment of any public housing that needs it
- Provide financing to assist city employees to purchase in the City and make sure they do if at all possible, especially teachers and police
- Encourage major institutions to create employee housing programs
- Up-zone around commercial cores and transit
- Rezone surplus industrial and commercial land for residential use.
- Lift zoning restrictions that limit development of accessory apartments in private homes.
- Concentrate infrastructure improvements
- Concentrate code enforcement
- Eliminate permitting, inspection and other barriers that contribute to increased building costs, and make Building department responsive, competent, and free from corruption.
- Amend housing codes to provide more flexible rehabilitation codes for existing buildings and in-fill developments (?smart codes?) to encourage the building scattered-site low- and moderate-income housing.
- Revise tax-foreclosure laws to simplify city acquisition of vacant and abandoned properties for affordable housing.
- Tax increment financing (TIF) for housing development
- Develop a program to get vacant and abandoned properties developed by acquiring them and selling them to developers, at discounted prices if need be.

This presentation (outline) by John McIlwain, Senior Resident Fellow at the Urban Land Institute, and the J. Ronald Terwilliger Chair for Housing, to the National League of Cities First Tier Suburbs Council on March 13, 2005.