

# Unlock the Commonwealth

New housing and growth policies to help  
Massachusetts realize its full potential



Massachusetts Housing  
Partnership

Massachusetts Housing Institute, June 2016





# AREAS SUITABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT AS SITES FOR VETERANS HOUSING

AREAS SHOWN ARE THOSE TRACTS OF LAND, 5 ACRES OR MORE IN SIZE, NOT IN PUBLIC OR INSTITUTIONAL OWNERSHIP NOR IN USE AS COMMERCIAL, MARKET GARDENS OR ORCHARDS. THESE AREAS ARE ZONED FOR RESIDENTIAL USE AND ARE SUITABLE BY REASON OF TOPOGRAPHY, ACCESSIBILITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD FACTORS FOR DEVELOPMENT AS LARGE-SCALE RENTAL OR OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS FOR VETERANS.

TRACT AVERAGE SIZE



BUILT-UP MUNICIPALITIES WITH NO SUITABLE BUILDING LAND IN 5 ACRE TRACTS



PARTIALLY BUILT-UP MUNICIPALITIES WITH SUITABLE BUILDING LAND LIMITED TO LESS THAN 500 ACRES



MUNICIPALITIES WITH OVER 500 ACRES IN SUITABLE SITES AND FAVORED BY ACCESSIBILITY



MUNICIPALITIES WITH OVER 500 ACRES IN SUITABLE SITES BUT HINDERED BY INACCESSIBILITY AND MOSTLY SUITABLE FOR HIGH-PRICED DEVELOPMENT.



AREAS AND TOWNS INCLUDED IN THIS STUDY ARE: 1. MAINE: MAINE METROPOLITAN AREA; 2. N.H.: PLAIN, TOWNSHIPS INDICATED THIS WAY

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

FEDERAL: LAND USE MAPS, U.S.G.S. AERIALS, CITY AND TOWN MAPS, CITY AND TOWN ENGINEERS, PLANNING DEPARTMENTS, STATE PLANNING BOARD

GREATER BOSTON DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE INC. 80 BRIMLEY STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

JANUARY, 1967



THIS MAP COMPILED FROM DATA FURNISHED BY THE OFFICIALS OF PARTICIPATING TOWNS, CITIES, AND TOWNSHIPS OF MAINE AND NEW HAMPSHIRE.

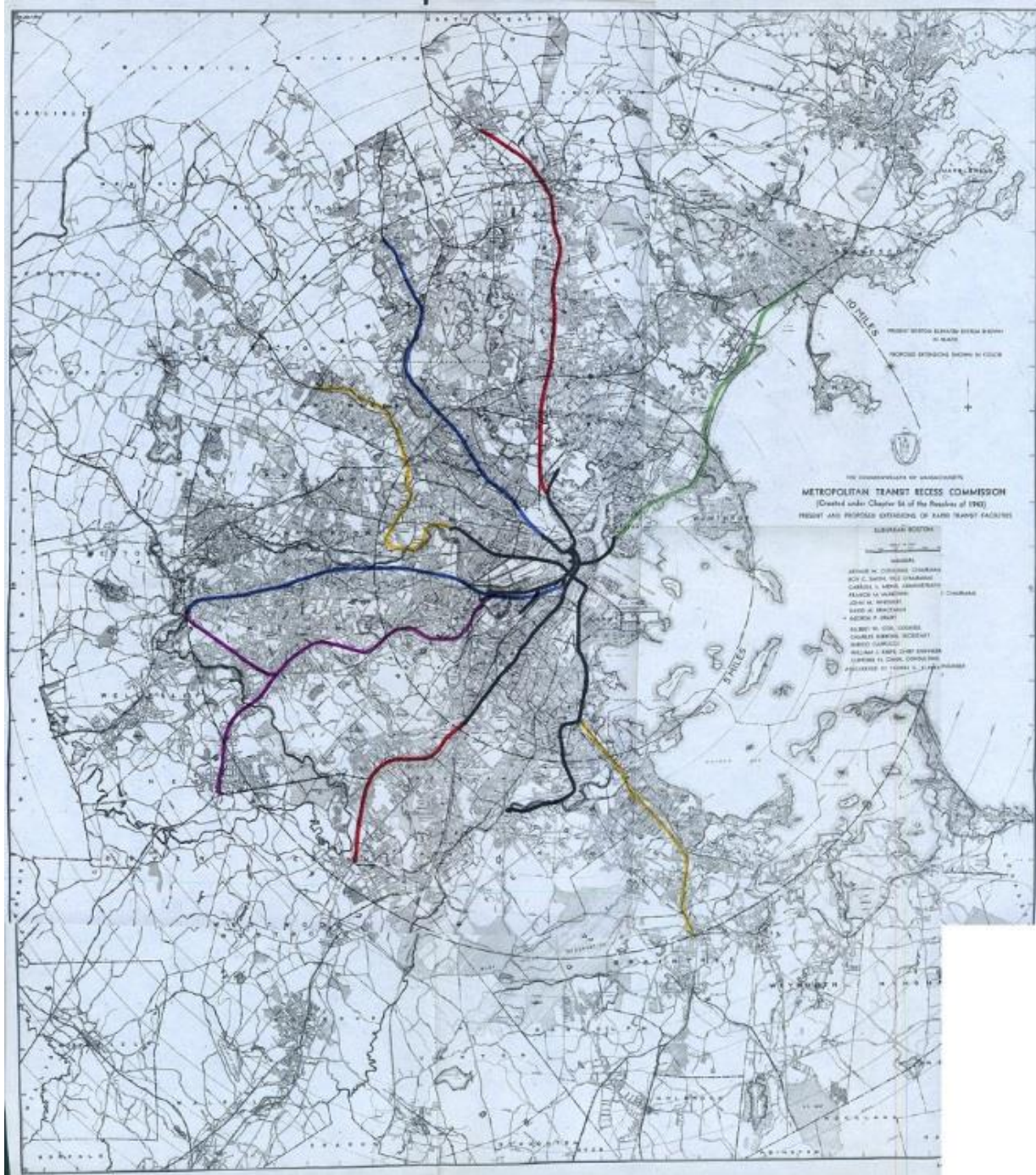
AREAS WELL SUITED TO MODERATE PRICED SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE OR RENTAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT.

AREAS WELL SUITED TO MEDIUM PRICED SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE DEVELOPMENT.










THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
**METROPOLITAN TRANSIT RECESS COMMISSION**  
 Created under Chapter 91A of the Statutes of 1960  
 REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF RAILWAY FACILITIES

**GENERAL NOTES**

- 1. THE MAPS SHOW THE PROPOSED RAILWAY FACILITIES AS OF JANUARY 1, 1961.
- 2. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION.
- 3. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF TRANSPORTATION.
- 4. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.
- 5. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.
- 6. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD.
- 7. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION.
- 8. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
- 9. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT.
- 10. THE RAILWAY FACILITIES SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

A decorative border composed of intricate black scrollwork and flourishes, arranged in a roughly circular shape around the central text. The background is a solid light beige color.

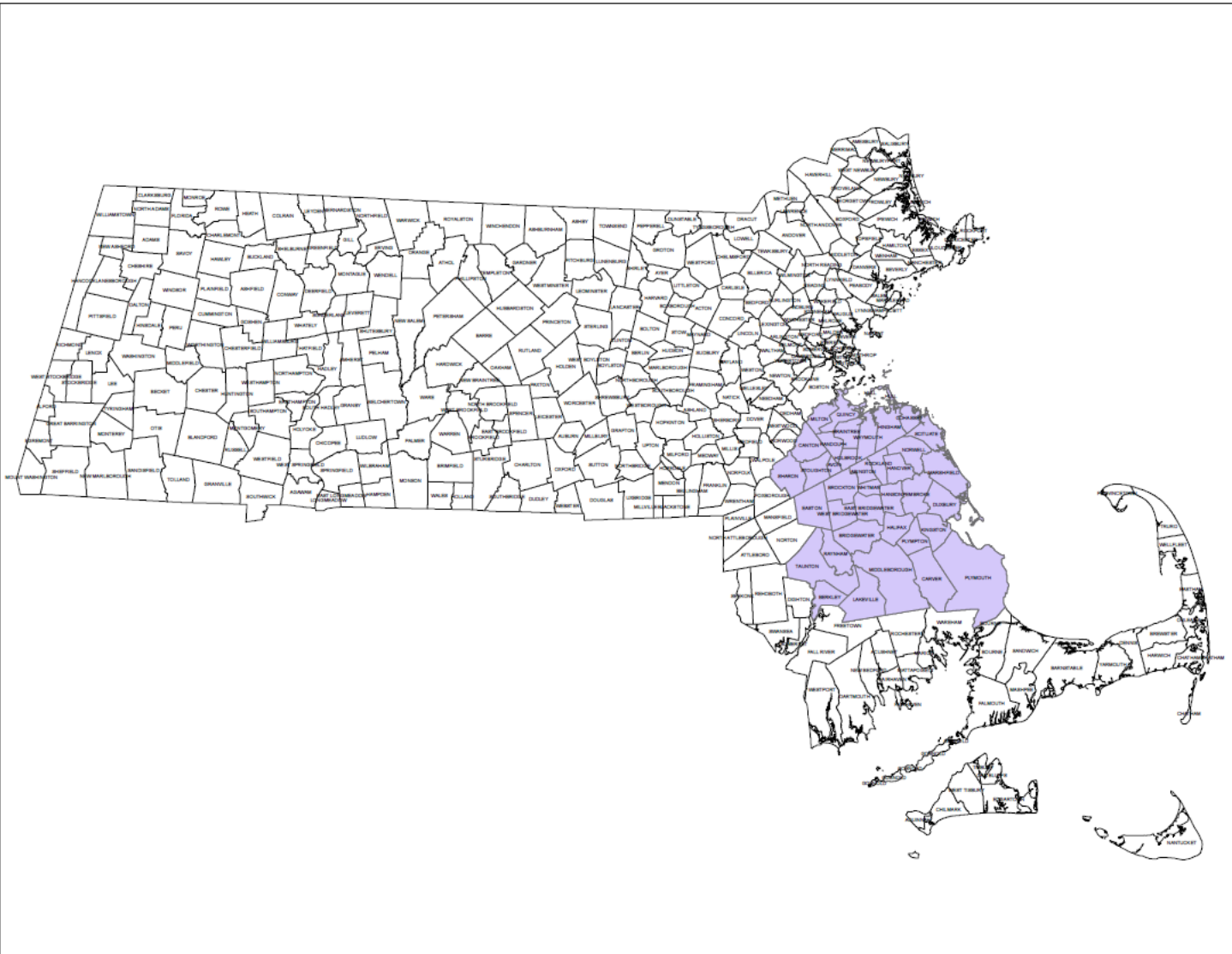
**Something  
went  
wrong.**



Our zoning rules and local approval process distorts the market's response to our housing needs.



# And that reflects the fragmentation of local land use regulation in Massachusetts



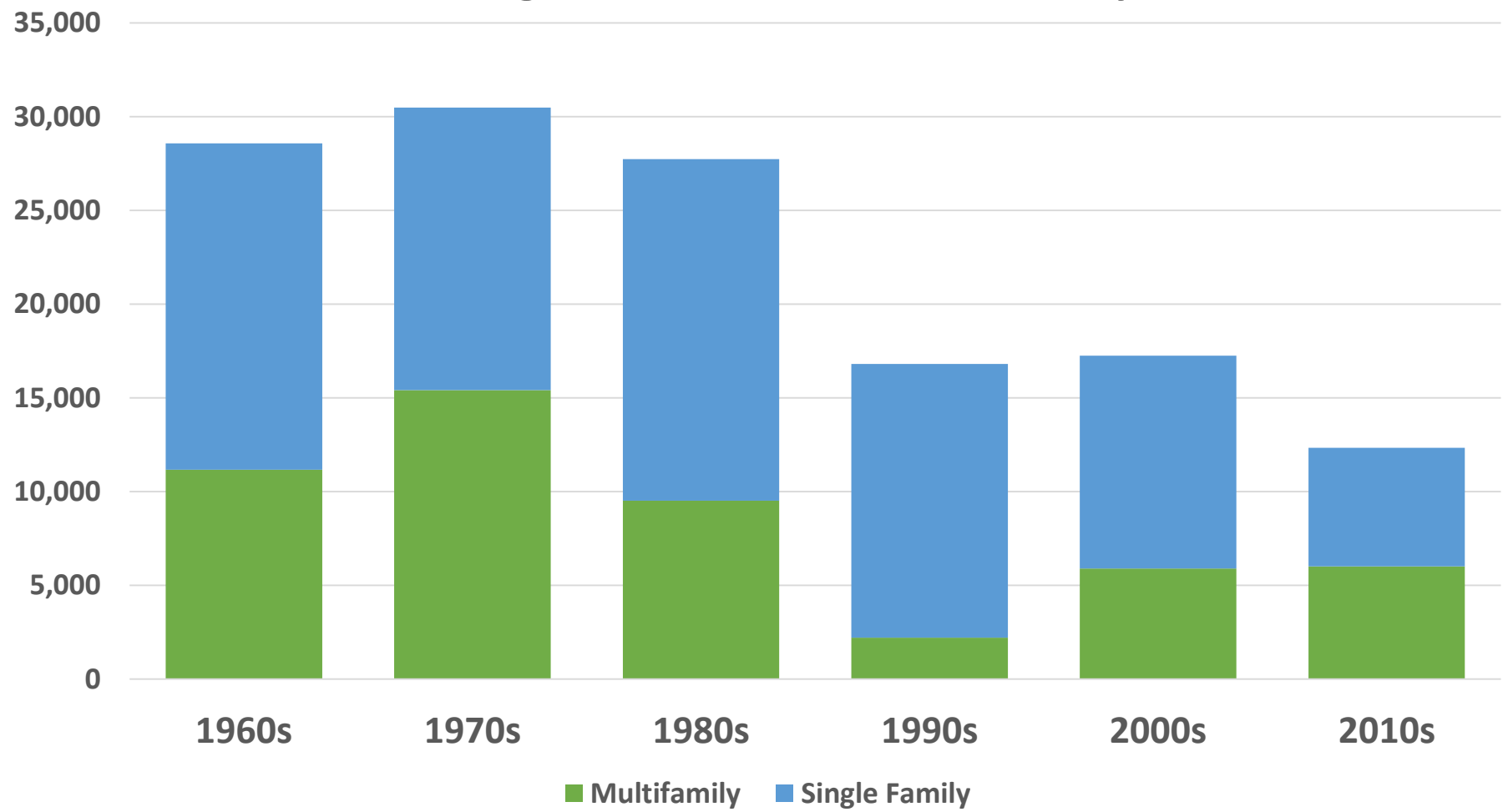
**One land use jurisdiction in Virginia serving more than a million residents = 38 separate jurisdictions in Massachusetts serving an average of 18,700 residents each**



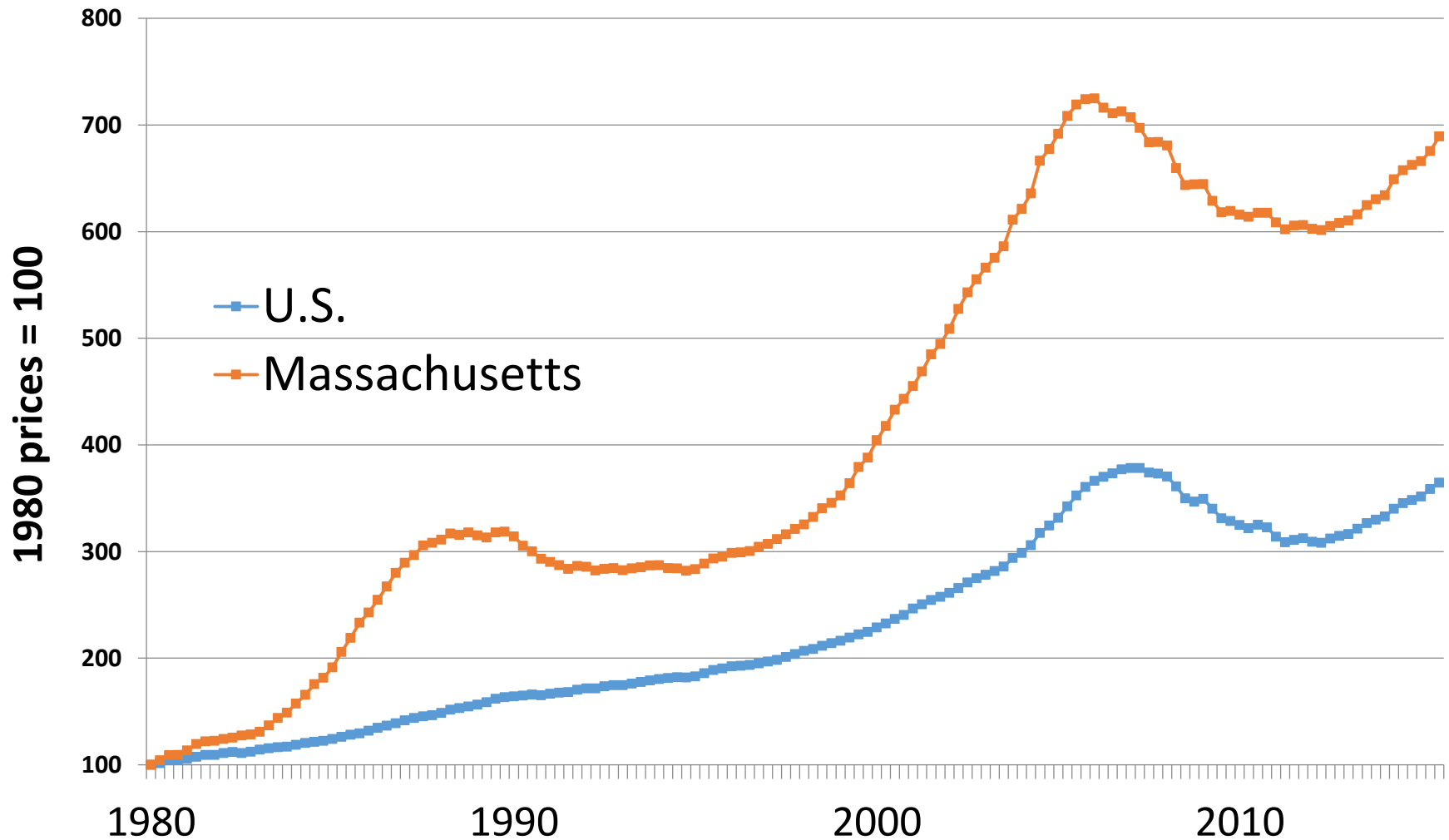
In recent years we've allowed less new housing than at almost any point since the 1950s.



Annual Housing Production in Massachusetts by Decade



# As a result, our home prices are now among the highest in the U.S.

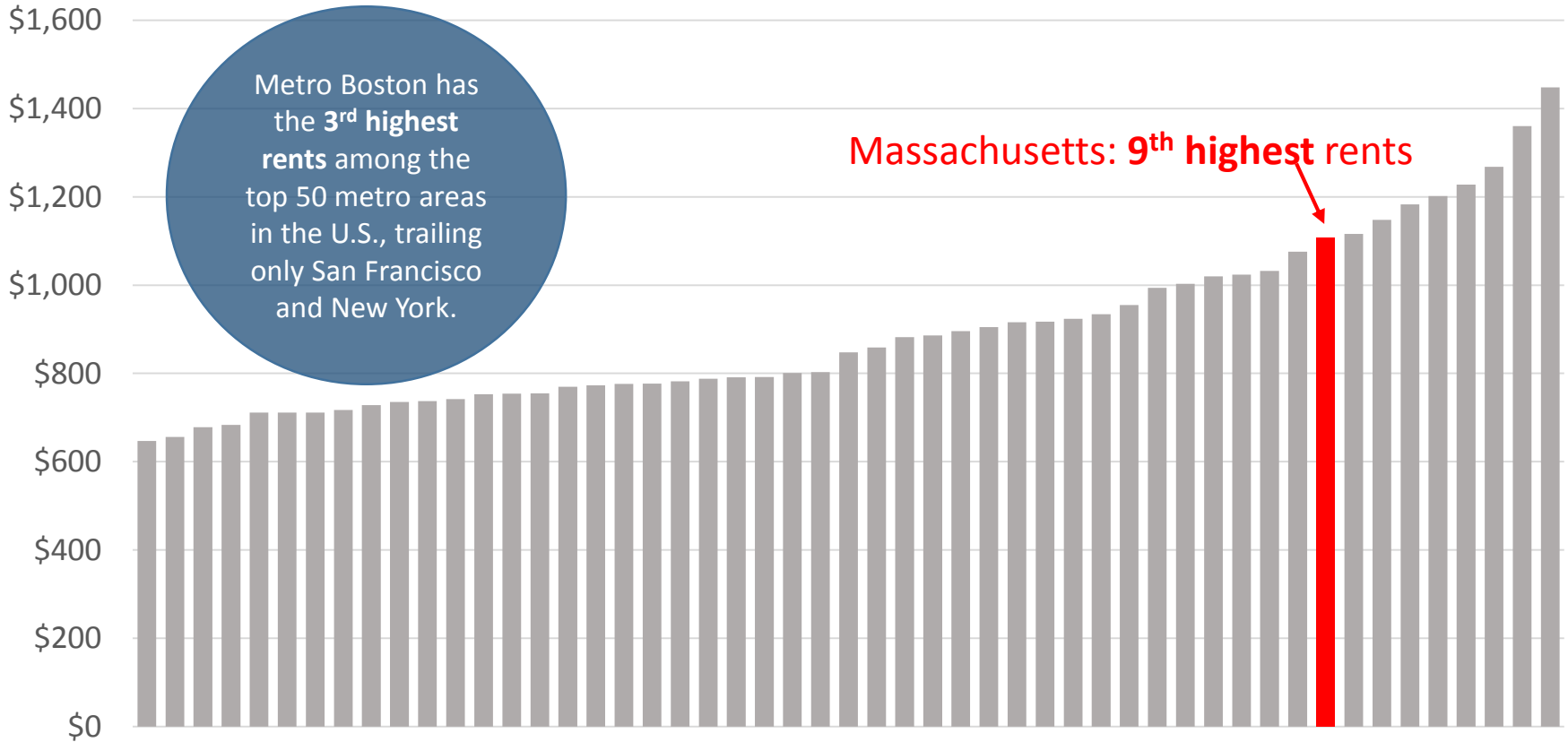




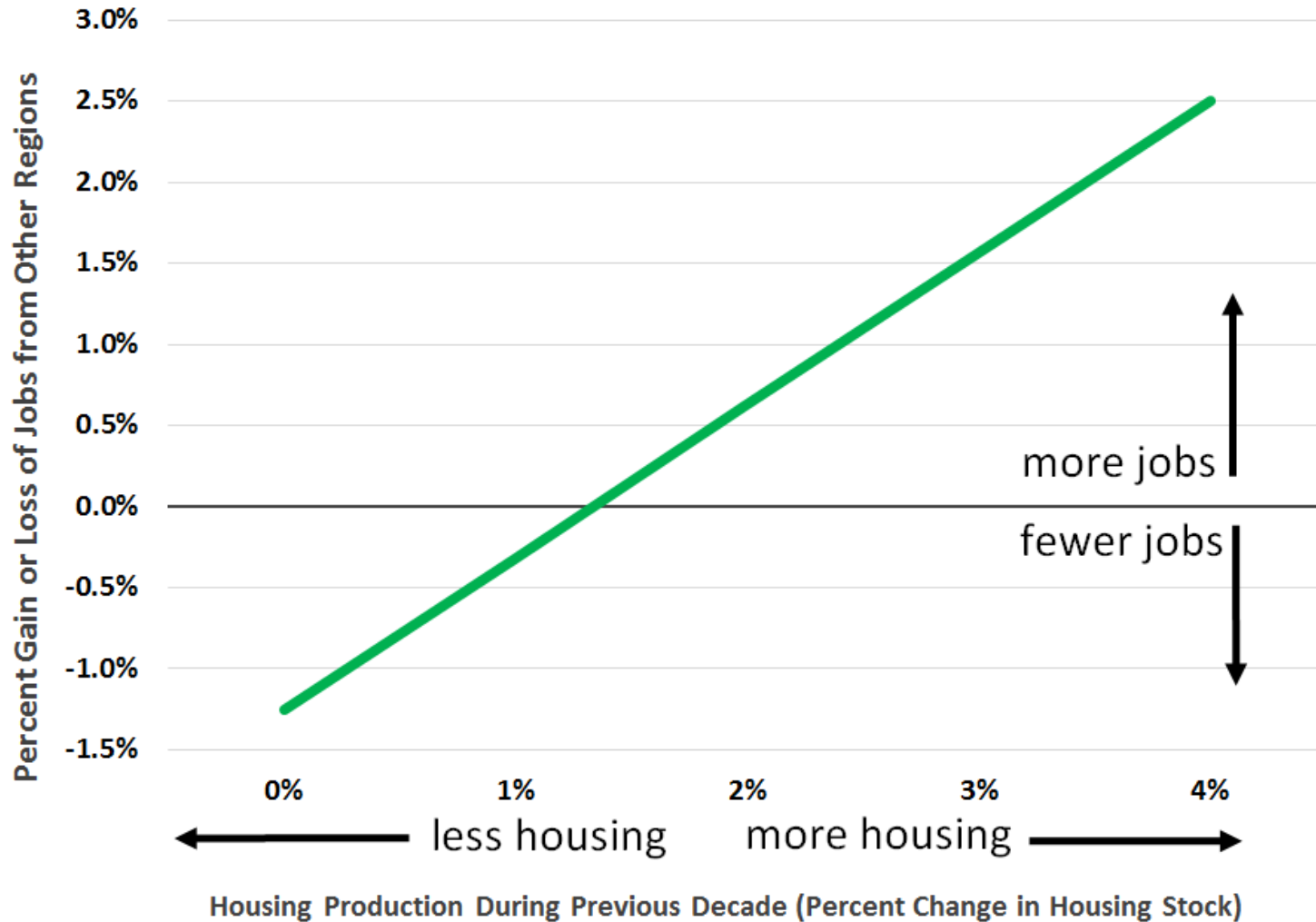
# Our rents are also among the highest, especially compared to our economic competitors.



## Median Rent by State

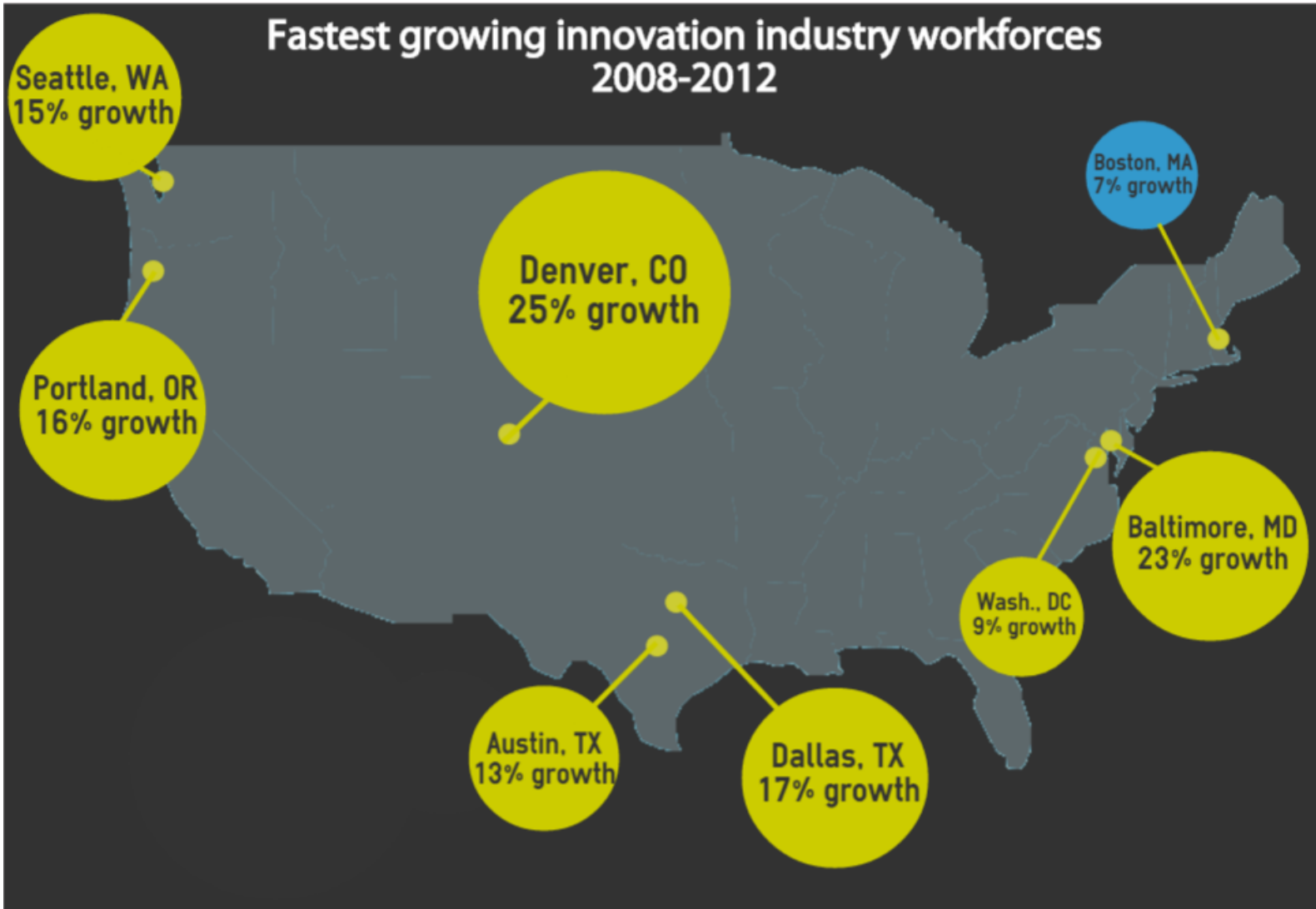


# Building enough new housing now is a prerequisite to keeping and growing jobs in Massachusetts.





Other metro areas around the country are doing a better job attracting young, educated workers.



# 5 Largest Migration Imbalances

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2014  
American Community Survey



## Portland, OR

For every 10 people we lost to Portland, we only got about 3 in return.



## Denver, CO

For every 10 people we lost to Denver, we only got about 6 in return.



## Atlanta, GA

For every 10 people we lost to Atlanta, we only got about 6 in return.



## Seattle, WA

For every 10 people we lost to Seattle, we only got about 7 in return.



## Dallas, TX

For every 10 people we lost to Dallas, we only got about 7 in return.

We are losing population to metro regions that offer better housing choices at a lower cost.

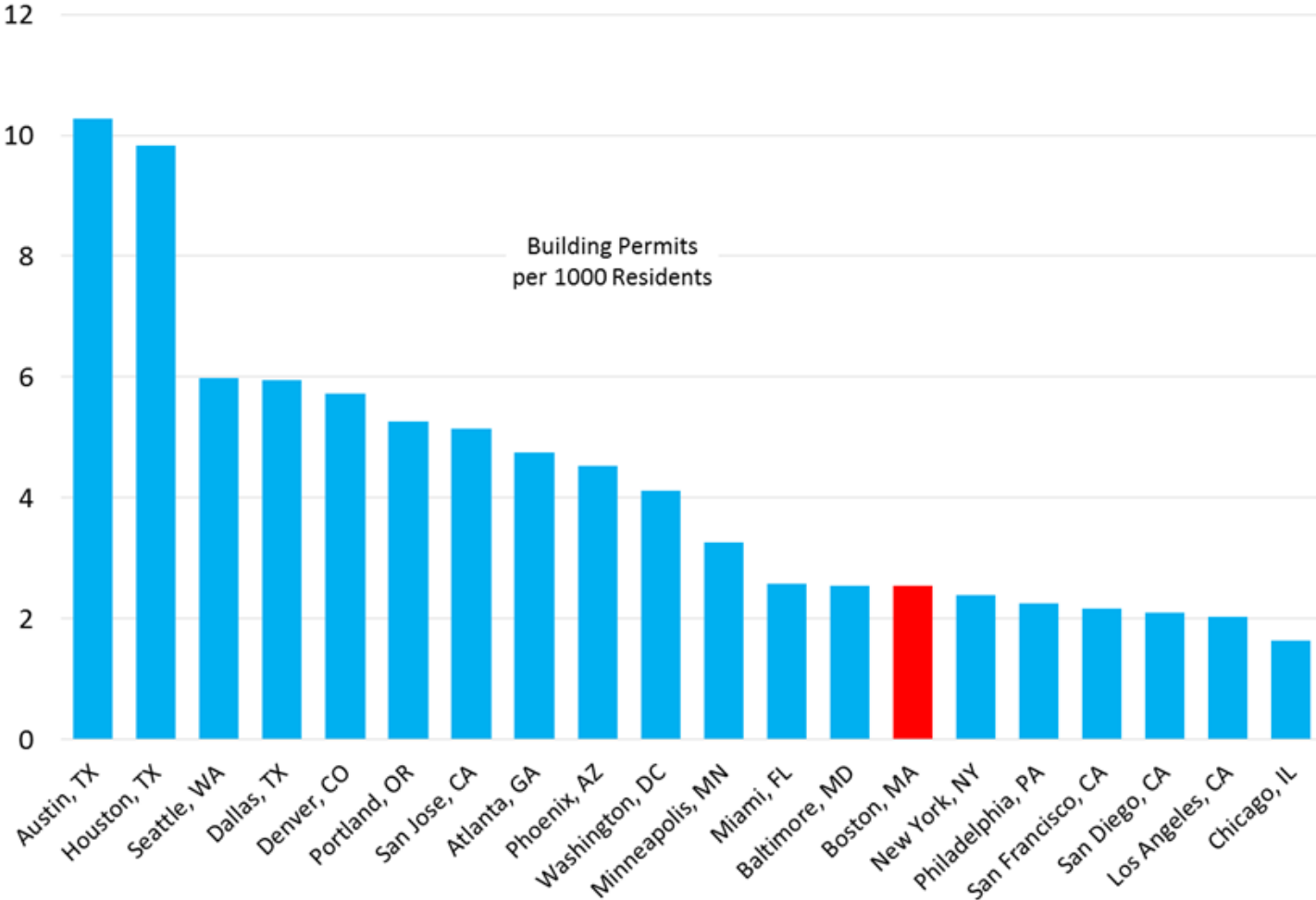


# Most of our economic competitors are producing more housing than metro Boston.



## Building Permit Rates of the 20 Largest Innovation Economy Metros

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 Building Permits Survey and 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates



# What's keeping us from building smart and producing the housing we need?



## **Our 351 cities and towns regulate land use with minimal accountability**

- Excessive minimum lot sizes
- Little or no opportunity to build multifamily housing
- Single-use "Euclidean" zoning with little flexibility
- Local septic regulations that promote large-lot sprawl
- Scant consideration of regional or statewide needs



# Some towns are bucking the trend and achieving great results



# And there are other positive signs ...and also a caution



- **New housing is trending toward multifamily and toward metro Boston’s “inner core” – 62% of all housing production last year**
- **Last year’s overall production was right on target**
- **Not all communities are doing their part: 2/3rds of last year’s multifamily housing was permitted in just five cities and towns**

## **Legislative proposals now in play:**

- Statewide zoning for multifamily housing while retaining local flexibility
- Cluster development as a universal standard
- Revenue sharing with cities and towns that permit the housing that facilitates job growth
- Greater regional collaboration
- State-level planning





# More information



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[www.mhp.net](http://www.mhp.net)

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