The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy

A Region Divided

The State of Growth in Greater Washington, D.C.

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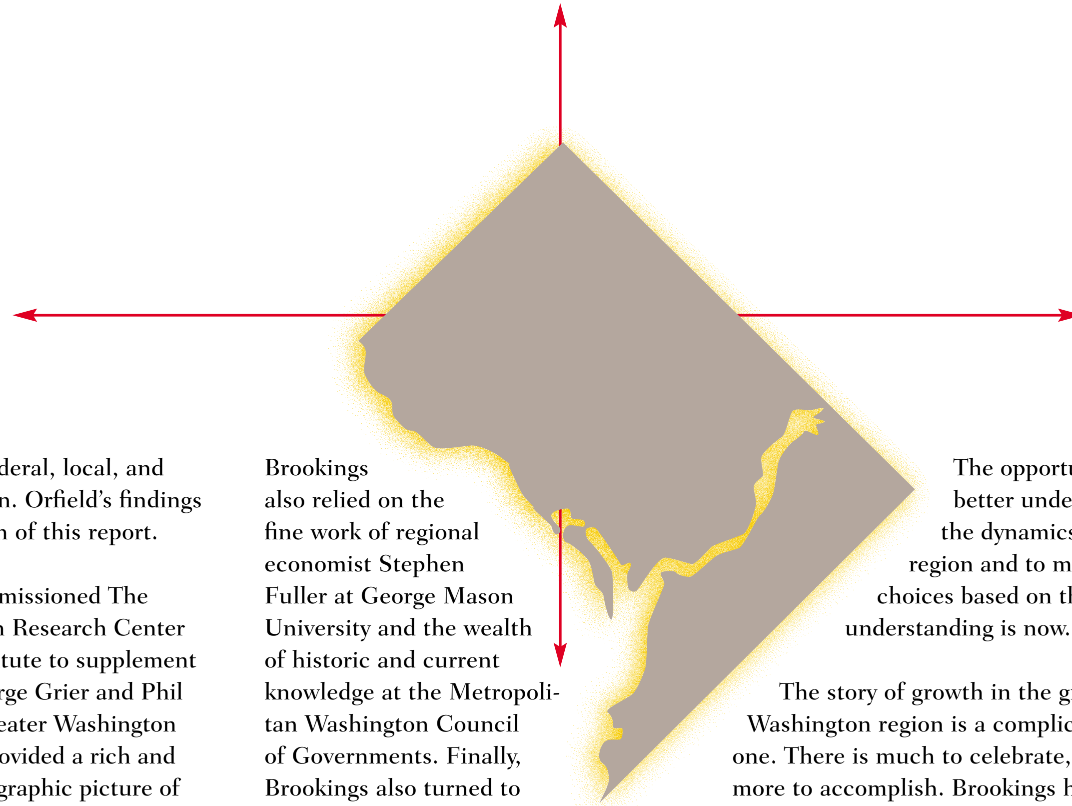
Mission Statement

The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy seeks to shape a new generation of urban policies that will help build strong neighborhoods, cities and metropolitan regions. In partnership with academics, private and public sector leaders, and locally-elected officials, the Center is informing the national debate on the impact of government policies, private sector actions, and national trends on cities and their metropolitan areas. By connecting expert knowledge and practical experience to the deliberations of state, regional, and federal policymakers, the Center aims to help develop integrated approaches and practical solutions to the challenges confronting these communities.

Preface



This report on the state of the greater Washington region draws upon new research as well as some existing literature to determine how the region is truly growing, particularly during this period of enormous prosperity and rapid change.

The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy commissioned metropolitan researcher Myron Orfield to analyze and map the socio-economic and growth trends in the Washington region. Wherever possible, Orfield used the most up-to-date figures and the smallest geographic unit available. Unfortunately, going beyond federal data sources (e.g., Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics) to get good information about the Washington suburbs and their neighborhoods requires time-intensive local data collection. Orfield's analysis strikes a good balance in using a mix of federal, local, and regional information. Orfield's findings form the foundation of this report.

Brookings also commissioned The Greater Washington Research Center and the Urban Institute to supplement Orfield's work. George Grier and Phil Dearborn at the Greater Washington Research Center provided a rich and more current demographic picture of each jurisdiction in this region, using figures from 1990 and 1996. Mark Rubin and Margery Austin Turner at the Urban Institute conducted a useful examination of the pattern of jobs and job growth in the region, by sector and by location (central city vs. inner beltway vs. outer beltway). The analysis by Rubin and Turner is part of a larger, comprehensive Urban Institute project about economic and social change and opportunities in every neighborhood in the Washington region. The full texts of all of these research studies are available at the Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy at Brookings.

Brookings also relied on the fine work of regional economist Stephen Fuller at George Mason University and the wealth of historic and current knowledge at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Finally, Brookings also turned to much of the *Washington Post's* thorough coverage of the region and its counties to ensure that this report captures the full tenor of our regional dialogue, politics, and policy developments.

Concerns about the effects of rapid growth in parts of this region are rising. The proposed solutions have been many, varied, and oftentimes competing. Given the pressing nature of this debate, Brookings chose not to wait until the 2000 Census was compiled and released before providing a picture of growth and development in the Washington area.

The opportunity to better understand the dynamics of this region and to make choices based on this understanding is now.

The story of growth in the greater Washington region is a complicated one. There is much to celebrate, but more to accomplish. Brookings hopes this report on the economic and social health of this metropolitan area helps inform this region's leaders as they work together to try to build a greater National Capital region.

Executive Summary

The greater Washington region has experienced enormous growth and change in the 1990s. It is enjoying economic growth and steady prosperity. The central city, once nearly bankrupt, is now posting budget surpluses. The region, already the nation's seat of governance, is also becoming the nation's capital of information technology and digital communication. This is a wealthy region and it has many economic, historic, and natural assets that will continue to attract visitors, new workers, and businesses that will keep this economy humming.

The booming economy has made growth a more pressing issue in this region, particularly in the fast-growing counties where traffic congestion, overcrowded schools, and threats to overall quality of life have elected officials, business leaders, and citizens scrambling for solutions. This report reveals that the challenges of growth are broader and more complex. In short:

1 **The Washington region is divided by race, income, jobs, and opportunity, with the eastern half of the region carrying the area's burden of poverty and social distress while the western half enjoys most of the region's fruits of prosperity.** But the divide cuts through jurisdictions so that the District and its suburbs have both pockets of distress and areas of affluence. In the end, these polarizing trends hurt fast-growing counties and ultimately shape the pattern of growth in this region. Struggling neighborhoods with poor performing schools and wealthier neighborhoods with expensive housing—both located in the core of the region—compel some businesses and families to locate in outlying suburbs, putting additional pressures in these already fast-growing communities. The problems of hyper growth on one hand and social distress on the other are intertwined.

2 **The Washington region has the resources to bridge this divide.** This is primarily a prosperous region. The central city has traction in the new economy. The region's economy is rapidly diversifying. Capital and philanthropic investments are rising. Poverty here, while deeply troubling, is not as severe or as concentrated as in other communities. And while Washington is a region with two states, a state-like central city, and an engaged federal government, this region has a low degree of local fragmentation that makes building collaborations more possible than in other places.

3 **The Washington region can grow smarter and must do this now.** First, the regional debate in the Washington area is picking up momentum —at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. But this conversation is mostly aimed at trying to ease the crowding out of roads, schools, local budgets, and the last remaining open space in neighborhoods. Unless these current efforts broaden and embrace the fuller set of factors that fuel decentralization, this region will not be able to realize its full economic potential. Secondly, growth is not going to go away. This region will continue to gain jobs and people and consume more land. If our regional divisions widen as growth proceeds, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to create a region that is competitive, prosperous, and livable.

I. A Region Divided

The maps in this report and the research on which this report is based depict a region that is divided—by income, race, job growth, and type of public investment. The dividing line runs along 16th Street NW in the District, and along I-95 in Maryland and Virginia. For the most part, middle- and upper-income families, substantial public and private sector investment, and economic expansion are found on the west side of this line, while lower-income families, minorities, and little or no job growth are found on the east side of this divide. Of course, not every western community is affluent, and not every eastern community is struggling. But the trends indicate an east-west fault line.

In some cases, the divide cuts right through communities, so that a single jurisdiction can be, paradoxically, both prosperous and troubled. The District has affluent neighborhoods and the area's highest concentration of jobs within the same borders as the largest concentration of poor families and welfare recipients. Arlington has a strong commercial and office sector, and some neighborhoods of expensive housing in North Arlington, but also signs of economic distress in its school population in South Arlington. Prince George's County has a very low overall poverty rate and many middle-class families living beyond the Capital Beltway, but also a high number of working families earning less than the regional median income. Counties on the western side of the region are generally prosperous but are struggling with traffic congestion, school overcrowding, and poorer student populations in some schools.

a. Main Findings

- **The Income Divide** At the end of 1996, 45 percent of the region's poor lived in the District of Columbia. By May 1999, 64 percent of the region's welfare recipients lived in the District, while 15 percent lived in Prince George's County. In 1996, the District and Prince George's County had the most single-parent households with children. Also in 1996, 30.1 percent of District households, and less than half of the families living in Alexandria, and Prince George's, Frederick and Arlington counties earned more than $50,000 a year, compared to 71.3 percent in Fairfax County, 66.4 percent in Montgomery County, and 61.1 percent in Loudoun County.

- **The Race Divide** In 1996, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County had 70 percent of the region's black population and 57 percent of the region's non-white population, but only 32 percent of the region's total population. The region is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, however. Other jurisdictions, such as Arlington, Alexandria and Montgomery and Fairfax counties, saw significant increases in their non-white populations from 1990 to 1996.

- **The School Divide** In 1997, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County had 32 percent of the region's public school students, but 55 percent of the region's low-income students and 62 percent of the region's black and Latino public elementary school students. In 1996, there were 75 public schools in the region with more than three-quarters of their students eligible for free or reduced cost lunches. All but three were in eastern D.C. There were 53 public schools in the region with roughly half to three-quarters of their students eligible for free or reduced cost lunches. Thirty-nine of these were in older suburban neighborhoods, including 20 in Prince George's County, and nine in Arlington.

- **The Job Divide** As of June 1998, the District had 24 percent of the region's jobs, while the suburbs outside of the Capital Beltway were home to half of all regional jobs and two-thirds of all suburban jobs. Yet, the areas with the densest concentrations of jobs are mostly found in the central city, Arlington and Alexandria, and near the Capital Beltway.

- **The Transportation Divide** Of the $2.8 billion spent on major highway improvements in the Washington suburbs between 1988 and 1998, 10 percent of the public funds went to improving roads inside the Capital Beltway, while 80 percent went to roads outside of the Beltway.

- **Other Consequences of Growth** For three years, the Washington region has been ranked the second most congested metropolitan area in the country, behind Los Angeles. In 1996, the region also ranked first for the number of hours a person wastes sitting in traffic.

  Loudoun County projects needing 22 new schools in the next six years; Prince George's County needs 26 new schools in the next 10 years. Fairfax County has 14,000 students learning in 550 trailers. In addition to needing more classrooms, the "big three" suburban counties are also seeking additional funds to renovate older schools.

  From 1970 to 1990, the population of the Washington region increased by 35.5 percent, while the amount of land used for urbanized purposes (houses, shopping centers, office buildings, parking lots, etc.) increased by 95.7 percent, or almost two and a half times as fast.

b. Implications

The eastern portion of this region bears the burden of poverty. Washington, D.C. and Prince George's County bear the highest costs — fiscally and socially — of housing the region's poorest families and children. Even affluent households in northwest Washington and east Prince George's County cannot escape the price of higher poverty, which they pay in higher taxes and reduced services. Arlington County and Alexandria also have a relatively large proportion of low-income and working families.

The western part of the region enjoys most of the fruits of prosperity. Wealth and prosperity primarily benefit those living west and north of the central city, in Fairfax, Montgomery, and Loudoun counties as well as other communities outside of the Capital Beltway. These jurisdictions have high proportions of their residents earning more than $50,000 and have become the location of choice for new firms.

The divisions in this region cannot be explained as "city versus suburb." Because the rough dividing line cuts through many counties and the central city itself, the region cannot be described as strong suburbs surrounding a weak city, nor even as strong outer suburbs ringing a weak urban and inner suburban core. Many sections of the District and inner suburban communities are facing economic and social challenges, but the other parts of the District and those suburbs are affluent.

This region is starkly divided by race. There is no denying the presence of racial segregation in this region: 70 percent of the area's African-Americans live in Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County. The racial divisions are in part, but not entirely, class divisions. In this region, as in so many others, poverty and race are intertwined. The areas with higher poverty rates and more schoolchildren receiving free or reduced cost lunches are areas where black and Latino families live. Not all minority families in the region are poor—there is a thriving black middle-class in the portion of Prince George's County outside the Beltway. But it is true that black families of all income levels tend to live in the eastern portion of the region, while whites live in the western half. Mitigating this division somewhat is the increasing numbers of minorities and recent immigrants living throughout the metropolitan area.

These polarizing patterns hurt fast-growing counties. Growth is not only a concern of the communities that are struggling economically and losing residents. Fast-growing counties are straining to provide new schools, services, and infrastructure while preserving open space and protecting the environment. Of all of the area's jurisdictions, Prince George's County is in the toughest bind; it must deal with both the high costs of social distress in inner Beltway communities and the high costs of new growth elsewhere in the county.

The patterns of extensive growth in some communities and significantly less growth in others are inextricably linked. Poor neighborhoods with high costs, low services, and poor-performing schools push out families with resources, who move to the edges of the region. As these families leave, so do jobs, services, and businesses. This flight only further weakens already struggling places and puts more pressures on other, fast-growing jurisdictions. Another factor pushing families to the outer edges of the metropolitan region and exacerbating the crowding and congestion there is high housing prices in many affluent communities, including the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., North Arlington and other places on the west side of the region. Most families cannot afford to live in these expensive, centrally located neighborhoods, so they move to the region's edge.

2. A Region with Resources

The divisions in this region may seem intractable but Washington has the assets to bridge them. In the 1990s, the region as a whole has experienced dramatic population gains, with accompanying job growth and rising median household incomes. Despite federal government downsizing, the Washington area's economy has been expanding steadily. Capital investment is rising, and the region's housing, retail, and office markets are among the hottest in the country. Philanthropic giving, from traditional foundations and corporate leaders, is growing. The region has seen remarkably low unemployment rates, declining poverty levels, and less crime.

This region is home to the federal government, a major employer that will not relocate, and a tourism industry that is the envy of other cities. Unlike other metropolitan areas, this region's task is not bailing out a failed central city. The District, despite its challenges, is a city with traction in the new economy, a high concentration of jobs, and many neighborhoods that are attractive to businesses and residents. The regional economy is now diverse and, thanks to the area's three major airports, it is globally competitive. Poverty here, while deeply troubling, is not as severe or as concentrated as in other communities. The divisions in this region are serious, but not so deep that the strong economy cannot lessen them. Also, despite the complexities of including two states, a unique city with many state-like powers, and a closely-involved federal government, the Washington metropolitan area has a low degree of local fragmentation. Unlike in other regions, the political leaders from each of the area's jurisdictions can actually sit around one table and build regional collaborations and coalitions much more easily than other places.

3. A Region that Can Grow Smarter

All of the jurisdictions in the region, no matter what their social or economic condition, are linked. One reason that low-income families live in the eastern part of the region is that there is almost no affordable housing elsewhere (Montgomery County is an exception). This initial imbalance can spark a chain reaction of increasing instability and the subsequent flight of families with resources. As poverty and distress increase in one community, and as schools cease to be able to educate students, families and businesses flee to the edges of the metropolitan area, further weakening older communities, accelerating the decentralization of the region's economy, and creating additional crowding in schools and on roads. Another factor feeding growth on the fringe is the high cost of housing in many affluent, centrally located western areas. Families who cannot afford to live in these communities also head to the region's edge or remain in neighborhoods with cheaper housing. Leaders in this region must understand that the problems of explosive growth in one half of the region and little growth in the other are inextricably linked, and must be solved together.

In fact, these problems are often linked in another way, because many if not all of them can be found in the same jurisdiction. As noted above, the rough east-west dividing line between wealth and distress cuts right through the District of Columbia and many counties and communities. Thus, just about every decision-maker in this region has a reason to join in the search for solutions.

Now is the time to begin that search, for two reasons. First, issues of traffic congestion, school overcrowding and loss of open space have become central elements in regional (and local, and individual) conversations, and have led to some policy changes. The State of Maryland has been a leader in defining and implementing smart growth policies. Individual counties in Southern Maryland and Northern Virginia have taken steps to manage growth, imposing impact fees and even moratoriums on development in communities already struggling with overcrowded schools. Community groups, faith-based organizations, and environmentalists have organized around regional growth and workforce strategies. High-tech and other business leaders have rallied around a regional agenda involving transportation, education, and workforce development. However, the proposed and enacted solutions to these problems have not addressed the full range of forces that shape our region's patterns of growth and opportunity. Second, this region will continue to gain jobs and people and consume more land. If our regional divisions widen as growth proceeds, it will be difficult if not impossible, to create a region that is competitive, prosperous and livable.

Report Background

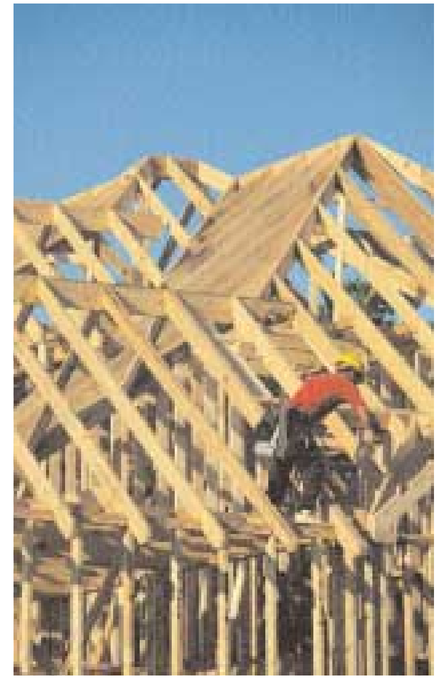
A number of studies have been conducted on different aspects of the greater Washington region. Some separately examine social, economic, and demographic trends, others focus on the region generally or the District of Columbia in particular. This report brings together some of the best knowledge of this region and introduces new research to show how the health of each jurisdiction here affects the overall metropolitan area. But this report is by no means comprehensive. It tries to link trends, such as social isolation, school composition, and traffic congestion, that are normally not discussed in tandem.

This report is based on a longer report entitled, "Washington Metropolitics" by researcher Myron Orfield and his Metropolitan Area Research Corporation. Orfield, a Minnesota state representative and metropolitan researcher, has mapped and documented the social, economic, and demographic trends in 22 regions across the country. This report supplements Orfield's analysis of the Washington region with the Urban Institute's most recent findings about job growth in the region and with the Greater Washington Research Center's latest analysis of census figures on the social and demographic trends in this region.

This project examined trends in the following communities of the greater Washington region: four counties in Maryland (Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George's); four counties in Virginia (Loudoun, Prince William, Arlington, Fairfax); five independent cities in Virginia (Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park); and the District of Columbia. This region of study is smaller than the Census-defined Washington MSA (which also includes Stafford and Calvert counties). But this region expands upon the region as defined by the governance boundaries of Washington's primary formal regional body, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, by including Frederick and Charles counties.

This Brookings report will be the first in a series of papers on the future of growth in the Washington region. Brookings will issue studies that build on these trends and identify a range of policy considerations that address such pressing issues as transportation, affordable housing, and workforce development.

The report includes: (1) an overview of the region's economy, how it has performed and evolved in recent years; (2) an examination—trend by trend, map by map—of growth in metropolitan Washington; (3) a summary of what the response has been to date in the region to address some of the concerns around growth; and (4) thoughts about how this region can begin to frame its vision and efforts for building a vibrant region. The report also provides an Appendix of tables, which support its main findings.



A Profile of the Region*

Demographics

Population

Washington Region	
1990	3,923,574
1996	4,201,738
1998	4,308,853

Racial Composition

Washington Region	1990 %	1996 %
White	65.8%	62.4%
Black	26.6%	28.1%
Asian	5.1%	5.9%
Other	2.5%	3.5%

Nation	1990 %	1996 %
White	83.9%	82.8%
Black	12.3%	12.6%
Asian	3.0%	3.7%
Other	0.8%	0.9%

Households

Washington Region	
1990	1,460,785
1996	1,583,696

Economics

Average Annual Pay

Washington Region		Nation	
1996	$36,383	1996	$29,686

Poverty Rate

Washington Region		Nation	
1990	6.3 %	1990	13.5%
1996	4.3 %	1996	13.7%

Unemployment Rate

Washington Region		Nation	
1990	3.2%	1990	5.62%
1996	3.9%	1996	5.40%
1998	3.2%	1998	4.48%

Jobs Created

Washington Region	
1989-90	16,900
1995-96	17,500
1996-97	56,700
1997-98	66,100

Gross Regional Product (GRP) in billions

Washington Region	
1996	$189.0
1997	$194.0
1998	$200.8

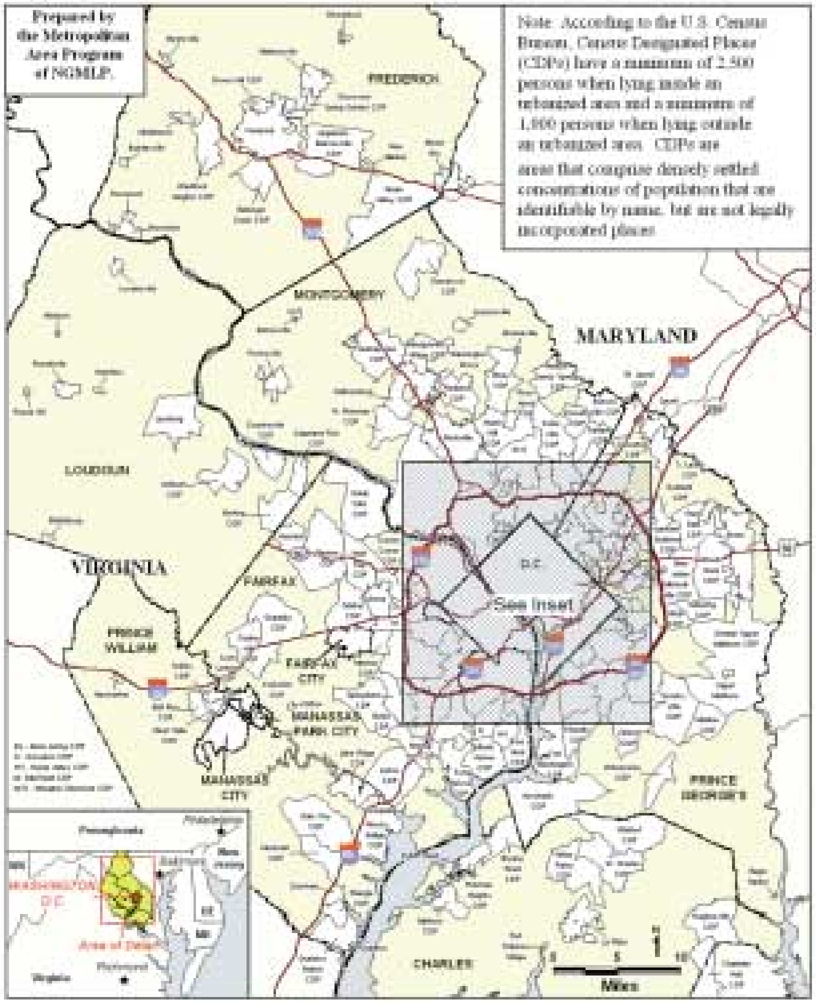
Office Vacancy Rate 1999

Washington Region	Nation
7.5%	9.0%

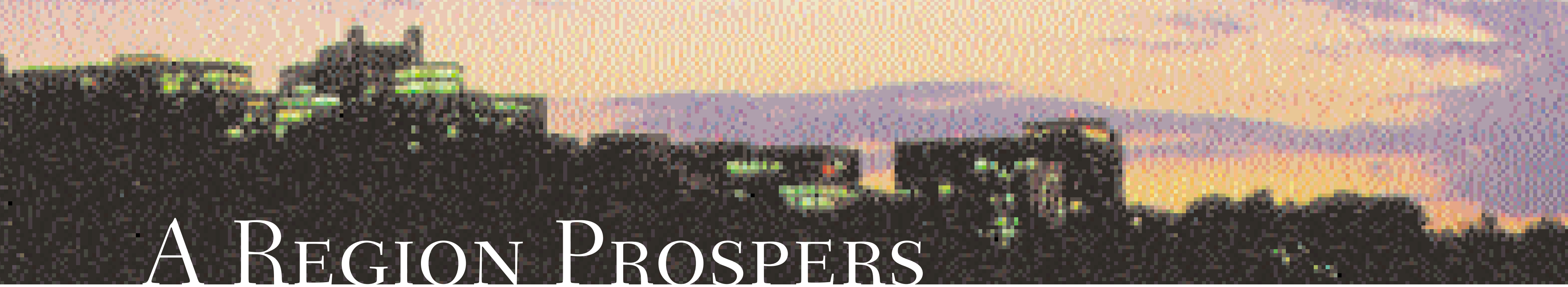
Permits for New Home Construction

Washington Region	
1990	24,621
1996	31,015
1998	37,603

*These statistics are for the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area, which also includes Stafford and Calvert counties.



Washington, D.C. Region



A Region Prospers

The greater Washington regional economy is strong and continues to flourish. Much of the region's prosperity can be attributed to the explosive growth of the technology industry and the private sector generally and the shifting role of the federal government from a major employer to a primary customer in the region. Federal government downsizing has meant a decline in the number of public sector employees—particularly in the District of Columbia—but, at the same time, federal outsourcing and federal government spending in the Washington region has increased steadily, spurring demand for private sector products such as systems integration, services, and research in areas ranging from bio-medicine to advanced weaponry. This has cushioned some of the effects of federal workforce reductions. Indeed, total employment in the Washington region grew by 12.3 percent from 1990 to 1998. Total jobs stood at 2.5 million in 1998.

The population of the region has also grown steadily, from 3.8 million in 1990 to 4.3 million in 1998, making it the 6th most populous metropolitan area in the country. The region's average annual pay is higher than the national average; its poverty, unemployment, and office vacancy rates are lower than the national average. In sum, by nearly all measures, the greater Washington region is thriving.

The number of new jobs in the Washington region continues to rise. The Washington region created 56,700 new jobs in 1997, 66,100 new jobs in 1998, and is expected to create 82,000 this year.

Washington is moving away from its "company town" past—the "company" being, of course, the federal government. The federal government is still a major economic presence in this region, even after the elimination of 60,000 area federal jobs since 1993. The federal government's spending contributed 34 percent of the area's gross regional product in 1997, and this percentage has stayed fairly constant since the mid-1980s.

Payroll has, essentially, been replaced by procurement as the major form of federal spending in the area. From 1984 to 1997, federal procurement spending in the Washington region grew by 182 percent, but only increased 9.3 percent across the country. Payroll and procurement money have different effects in the local economy. Procurement spending tends to increase the private sector's ability to attract new customers outside the region, and boost its export capabilities.

As the federal government has changed its shape and role, the private sector has grown steadily, and now represents 78.5 percent of the regional job base, up from 60 percent in 1968. The private sector is creating jobs in the region at a much faster pace—more than ten times faster—than the public sector.

Even the District of Columbia, hardest hit by federal downsizing, is seeing overall job growth, thanks to increases in private employment. While the District of Columbia lost 3,000 government jobs between April 1998 and April 1999, it added 4,600 private sector jobs, for a total gain of 1,600.

The information and communications (InfoComm) industries were the fastest growing industries in the region.

Since the 1980s, the InfoComm industries have established themselves as major regional economic engines. By 1998, there were at least 344,500 InfoComm jobs in the region—and this number includes only information and communications jobs, and not the vast number of other regional technology related jobs in fields like aerospace, defense systems, and biomedicine.

The InfoComm industry not only is creating jobs at a fairly rapid clip, it also has a strong "multiplier effect," meaning that each new InfoComm job leads to the creation of another job in another industry in the Washington region. The 66,600 InfoComm jobs that were created from 1992 to 1998 led to 67,300 other private sector jobs in the area.

The greater Washington region leads the nation in Internet services, and has the second largest number of technology workers in the nation, after Silicon Valley in California.

Median income, housing sales, and commercial construction levels—all indicators of economic health—look very strong for this region.

Median household income rose from $23,858 in 1980 to $48,900 in 1990 to $57,200 in 1998 (not adjusted for inflation).

Home sales in the first quarter of 1999 rose by 10.2 percent over the same period in 1998. Almost 19,000 new units were sold in 1998, up 22 percent from 1997. Last year, more homes were sold in the Washington region than in any other metropolitan area in the country.

In 1997, commercial construction of office space and other non-residential buildings totaled 21.2 million square feet, which was valued at more than $1.8 billion. This represents an 8 percent increase over 1996, the year in which both the MCI Arena and Jack Kent Cooke Stadium were built. Office space dominated the construction in the inner ring suburbs, while retail space grew the most in the outer suburbs.

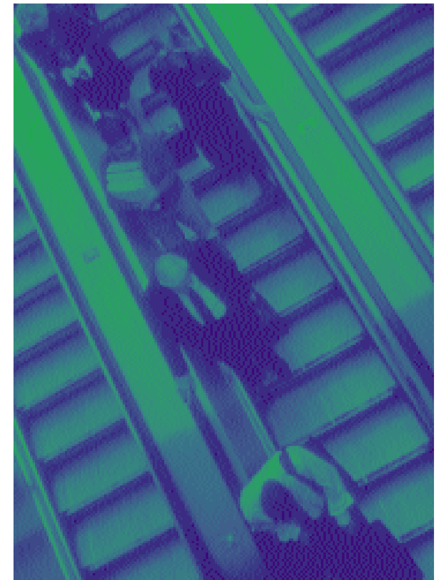
The Washington region's unemployment rate dropped to 2.3 percent in April 1999, the lowest level since 1980.

The suburban unemployment rate dipped down to a low 1.9 percent, creating labor shortages in all sectors, while the unemployment rate in the District dropped from 8.6 percent (or 23,100 unemployed) in April 1998 to 6.3 percent (or 16,900 unemployed) a year later.

The region's prosperity includes the District of Columbia.

To be sure, the District of Columbia has steadily lost population—11.1 percent between 1990 and 1996. However, an Urban Institute study points out that the loss in that six-year period was unusually high for the District, and resulted not so much from more people moving out of the District (annual rates of outmigration changed little from the 1980s and 1990s) but from significantly fewer people moving into the city from outside the region. The researchers suggest that this drop may have resulted from the spate of negative publicity about the District that was quite widespread in the early 1990s. Thus, it is possible that the worst population losses are behind the city.

There has been a steady decline in crime and unemployment and a significant growth in property values in the District. Home sales in the city were 48 percent higher in the first six months of 1998 than the first six months of 1997. Unlike many older central cities across the country, the District is still an important employment node, with a higher concentration of jobs than any other single jurisdiction in the region. While it is unclear how long these positive trends will last it is undeniable that they are good news for the District.



A Region Divided

Most of the counties and jurisdictions that make up the greater Washington region have benefitted significantly from the hot economy of the 1990s. The region as a whole is setting records on a range of positive economic indicators, and individual jurisdictions are also doing very well. Even the District of Columbia has slowed its population loss, its downtown is bustling well into the evening, and there is a homebuying boom in some of its neighborhoods.

But the story of growth in this region does not stop there. Overall prosperity masks a more troubling trend of socio-economic distress in particular areas of this region. The struggles these communities face, economically and demographically, do not show up in aggregate statistics. In a region composed of very large counties, three of which are nearing one million residents, county-wide indicators do not provide a precise account of all that is happening inside these county borders.

This report attempts to uncover the other story of growth in the Washington region. This section relies principally on the work of Myron Orfield, a Minnesota state representative and metropolitan researcher who has analyzed 22 metropolitan areas around the country and has visited many more. Orfield has mapped various demographic and market trends in the Washington region using indicators, such as census tract and elementary school level data, that give a detailed picture of the growth patterns in this metropolitan area. This section of the report also draws from the work of demographer George Grier at the Greater Washington Research Center and Mark Rubin and Margery Austin Turner at the Urban Institute.*

Orfield's maps starkly depict a region that is divided—by income, race, job growth, and type of public investment. For the most part, the half of the region that extends west of 16th Street, NW in

**The maps, charts, and table that support this region's trends are provided in the body and Appendix of this report.*

Washington, D.C., and west of I-95 in Maryland and Virginia, is reaping most of the benefits of the strong economy. It is the half that is home to most of the middle- to upper-income families, the new economy jobs and businesses, and retail and commercial growth. By contrast, the communities east of 16th Street, NW, and I-95, including portions of Arlington and Alexandria and Prince George's County have most of the area's poor households, minority families, and struggling schools. There are a few exceptions to this east-west division: a number of neighborhoods in Montgomery, Fairfax and farther counties face increasing social and economic challenges, and the portion of Prince George's County that is outside the Capital Beltway is not socially and economically distressed.

This is a complicated region, and hard numbers cannot adequately convey the texture of life in the places we describe in this report. Communities are defined by much more than median income, or job growth, or poverty levels. But there is no denying the powerful story these maps convey. Washington is a region divided.


The Income Divide: Poverty

The Trend:

At the end of 1996, approximately 175,000 persons, or 4.3 percent of the region's population, lived in poverty. Nearly half of the region's poor lived in the District.

Grier's analysis shows that while the number of persons in poverty in the Washington region declined by 27.5 percent between 1990 and 1996, approximately 45 percent of the region's poor are now concentrated in the District of Columbia. In 1996, nearly 15 percent of the District's residents, approximately 80,000 persons, lived in poverty.

In 1990, nearly all of the region's high poverty neighborhoods were located in east Washington, D.C.

By mapping poverty by census tract, Orfield shows precisely where poverty was located in 1990 in each of the jurisdictions. While poverty has dropped in the region, the map shows that nearly all of the high poverty neighborhoods are located on the east side of the District, with the rest are found in Prince George's County, and portions of Alexandria, and Arlington and Frederick counties. Of the 10 extreme poverty tracts ("extreme" indicating that 40 percent or more of the population is poor), all were located in east Washington, D.C. Of the 65 tracts that were 20 to 40 percent poor, 55 were in the District and the rest were in the suburbs.

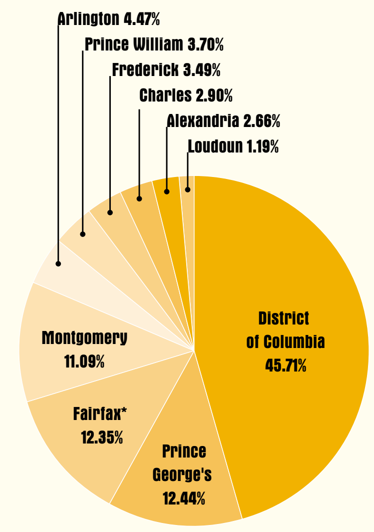
As of May 1999, 64 percent of the region's welfare caseloads were concentrated in the District.

In May 1999, there were 29,000 families receiving welfare benefits in this region. Welfare caseloads have declined here, as they have across the country, but they are becoming concentrated in the District. The second largest concentration—15 percent—is in Prince George's County. The remaining cases—20 percent—are scattered throughout the other suburbs. While welfare caseload declines are not an accurate measure of welfare reform's success, the distribution of caseloads does indicate something about access to economic opportunity.

What This Means:

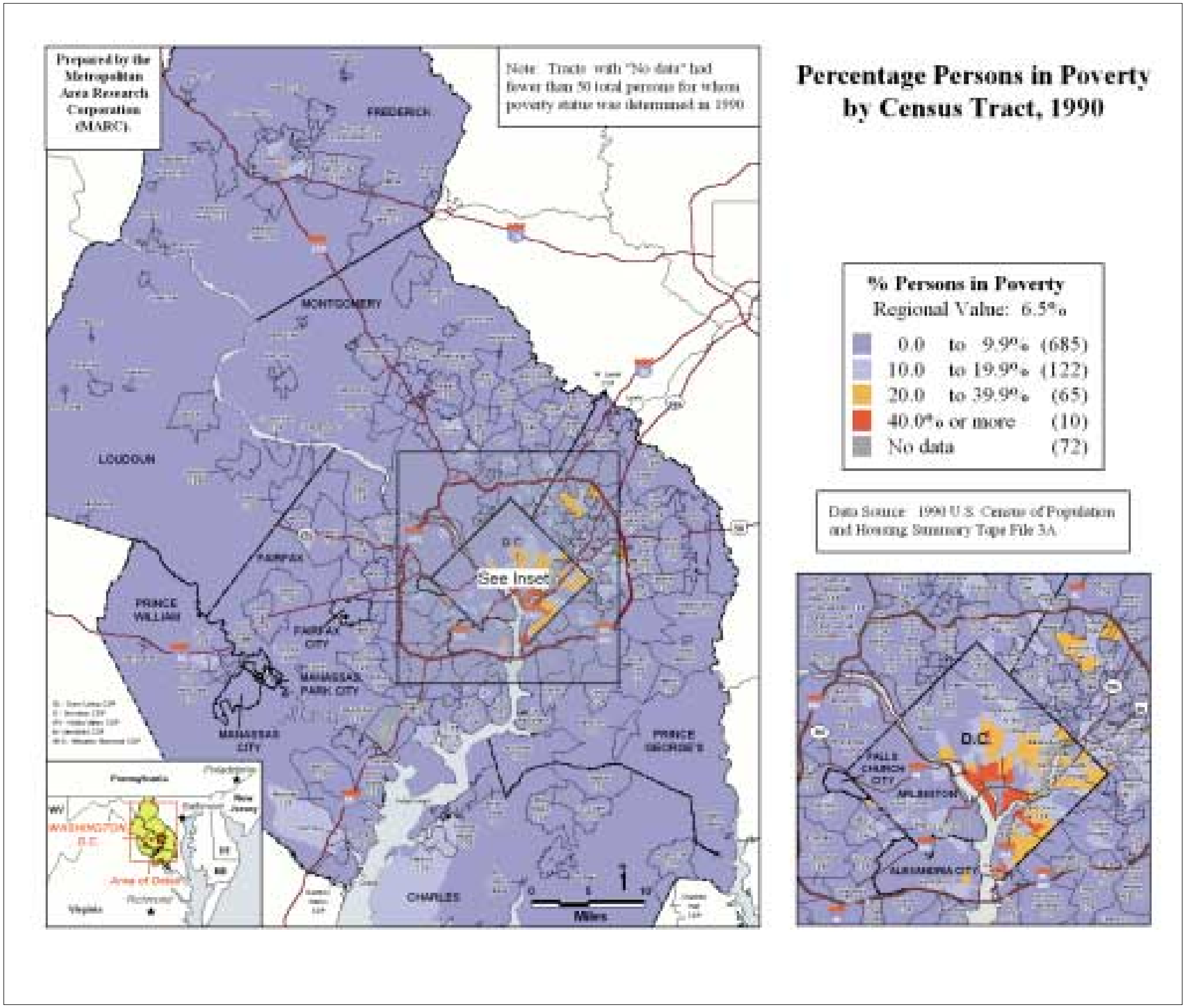
Poverty has some obvious detrimental consequences for individual households and particular neighborhoods. But being home to large numbers of poor people also places serious financial burdens on entire jurisdictions. A series of studies from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania has shown that, despite receiving federal anti-poverty aid, cities with high levels of poverty have to spend more of their own revenues on direct poverty expenditures (e.g. welfare, public health, and hospitals) than do jurisdictions with low poverty. Poverty also drives up the cost of providing other services like police, schools, courts, and fire protection. As two Wharton scholars concluded, "This reduces the resources cities have to serve nonpoor residents and increases the tax rates they have to charge all their residents." That means all the residents and businesses in the District of Columbia are paying for the costs of high poverty, at the expense of better services and infrastructure.

Share of Washington Region's Persons in Poverty, 1996 (In Ranking Order)

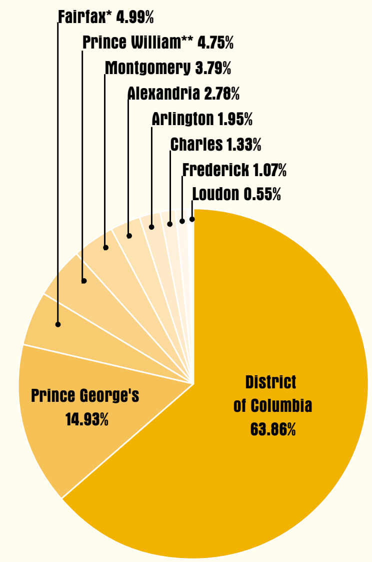


*Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.
**Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.

Source: 1990 - U.S. Census of Population; 1996 - Greater Washington Consumer Survey. Analyzed and computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990's," 1998.



Share of Washington Region's Welfare Caseloads, May 1999 (In Ranking Order)



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***Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: D.C Department of Human Services; Maryland Department of Human Resources, Family Investment Administration; Virginia Department of Social Services

The Income Divide:
Single Parent Households

The Trend:

In 1990, nearly all of the communities with a high percentage of female-headed households with children were located within the District and Prince George's County.

Orfield found that, in 1990, approximately 19 percent of all households with children in the region were headed by single mothers. However, as his map shows, nearly all communities with female-headed households comprising more than 33 percent of their families were found in the District and Prince George's County. Forty-seven percent of the District's families were single-mother families, while two communities in Prince George's County actually had a higher percentage of female-headed households with children than Washington, D.C.—Dodge Park (51.8 percent) and Palmer Park (54.9 percent). Other neighborhoods in Prince George's County with high proportions of female-headed households with children included Seat Pleasant (46.5 percent), Suitland-Silver Hill (44.3 percent), and Oxen Hill-Glassmanor (38.3 percent).

The map also shows that there are a number of census tracts in Arlington and Alexandria and along the major interstates of Montgomery and Fairfax counties that have over 19 percent of their households with children that are female-headed.

By 1996, the District and Prince George's County continued to have the highest percentage of single-headed households with children in the region.

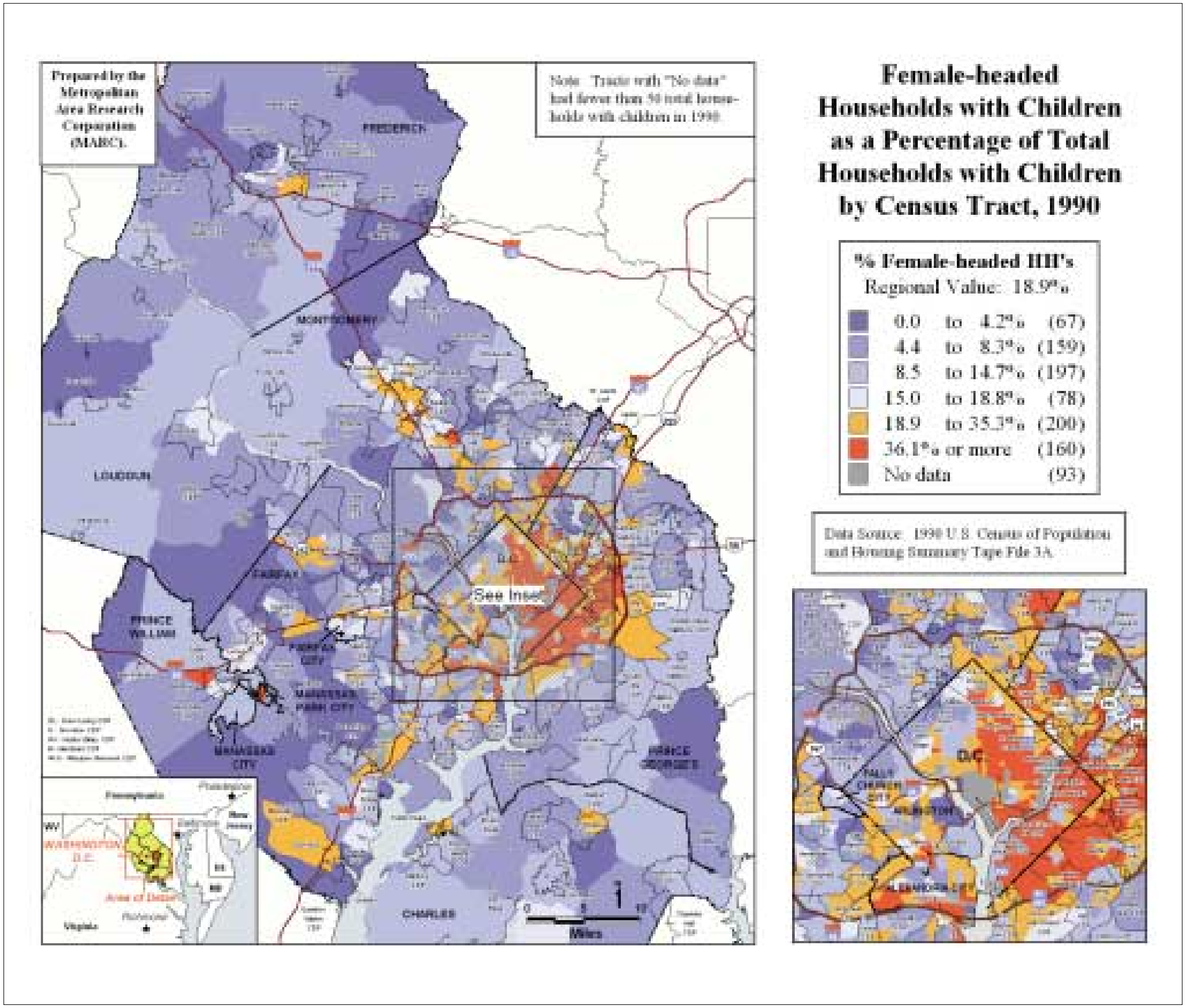
The Greater Washington Research Center tracked single-headed households with children—80 percent of which are headed by women. In 1996, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County had the highest number of single-headed households with children in the region (at 28,031 and 35,66, respectively) as well as the highest percentage of such families as a share of their households (at 12.1 percent and 12.7 percent, respectively). Together, the District and Prince George's County had nearly half (48 percent) of the region's single-parent households, even though they make up only 32 percent of the region's total population.

Between 1990 and 1996, the District and some of the outer suburbs saw a drop in their percentage of single-parent families, while the inner-ring suburbs experienced gains in these households.

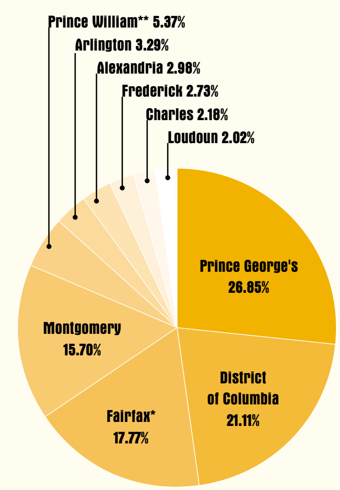
According to Grier, the District lost approximately 8,120 single-parent households between 1990 and 1996, a 22.5 percent drop. As a share of all households, the percentage of single-headed households with children dropped in the District (by 2.4 percentage points) and in Charles, Frederick, and Prince William counties (by an average of one percentage point), but grew slightly in Alexandria and Arlington, Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties by, on average, half of a percentage point.

What This Means:

While the percentage of single-parent households grew slightly in the inner-ring suburbs, female-parent households are primarily concentrated in the eastern part of the central city and in the close-in portions of Prince George's County. While single-headed households may not necessarily live in poverty, they clearly have more challenges than two-parent households with children. In 1997, the median household income for a married couple with children was $51,681, for a single father $36,634, and for a single mother $23,040.



Percent Share of Washington Region's Single-Headed Families with Children, 1996 (In Ranking Order)



*Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.
**Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.

Source: U.S. Census of Population; 1996 Greater Washington Consumer Survey. Analyzed and computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990s" 1998.

The Income Divide: Median Income

The Trend:

In 1996, households earning more than $50,000 were the majority in all jurisdictions but the District, Alexandria, and Arlington, Frederick, and Prince George's counties.

Grier found that in 1996, the District had the lowest percentage in the region of households earning more than $50,000—at 30.1 percent. In fact, the District was the only jurisdiction in the region that lost middle- and upper-class families between 1990 and 1996. The highest percentages of middle to upper income households were in Fairfax County (71.3 percent), Montgomery County (66.4 percent), and Loudoun County (61.1 percent).

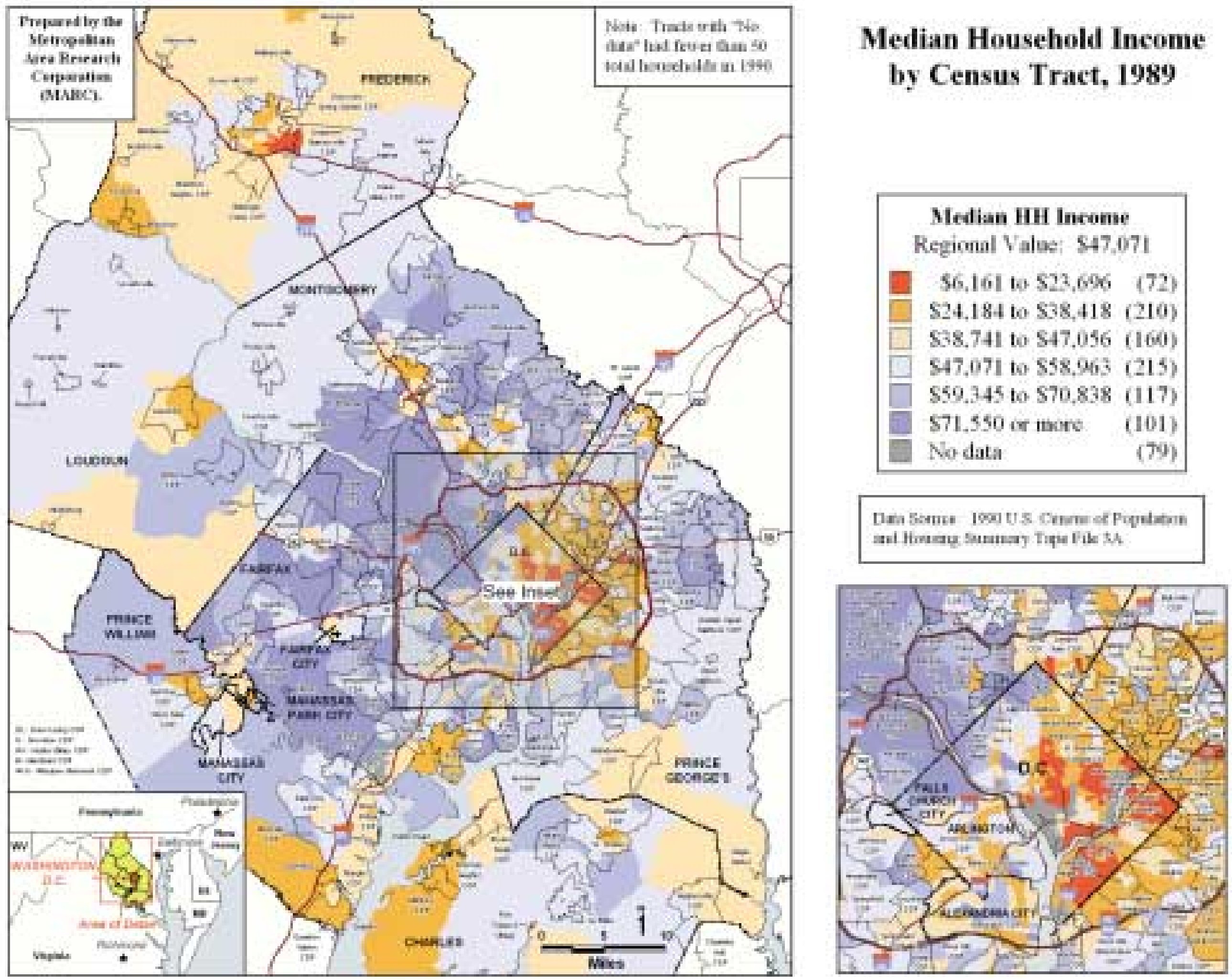
Between 1990 and 1996, the region experienced a 25 percent gain in the number of families earning $50,000 or more. The District lost households in this income bracket, albeit only a few—327 families.

In 1989, the majority of households earning less than the area median income were located in the east quadrants of the District, the inner part of Prince George's County, and the farther suburbs of Frederick, Loudoun, and Prince William counties.

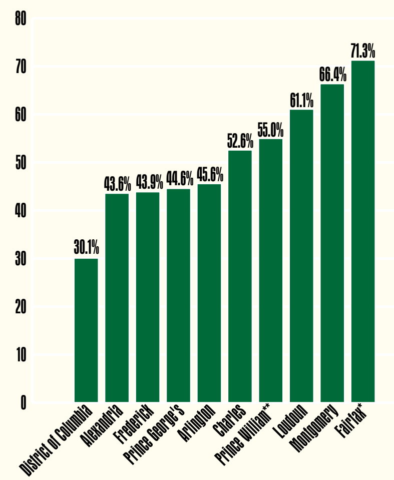
According to Orfield's 1989 census-tract level map, the majority of households earning less than $47,071 (then the median household income) were concentrated in the central and eastern core of the region. The District's median household income in 1989 was $30,727, or about 65 percent of the area median. There were ten individual communities that had lower median household incomes than the District; nearly all of these were in Prince George's County, including Langley Park ($29,570) and Dodge Park ($23,630). There were also nine communities in the region that had median household incomes above $90,000, including three above $100,000. All but one of these very affluent communities were located north or west (or both) of the District, such as Great Falls ($102,780) and Chevy Chase Village ($128,160).

What This Means:

Higher-income families live in the region's western half, while working families earning less than the area median income are concentrated in the central city and in the communities immediately east of the District. The portion of Prince George's County that is beyond the Capital Beltway is the exception to this pattern.



Percent of Washington Area Households with Incomes of $50,000 or More in Current Dollars, by Jurisdiction, 1996



*Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.
**Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.

Source: 1990 - U.S. Census of Population; 1996 Greater Washington Consumer Survey. Analyzed and computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990's," 1998.

The Race Divide

The Trend:

In 1996, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County made up 32 percent of the region's total population, but had 70 percent of the region's black population and 57 percent of the region's non-white population.

According to Grier's table, in 1996, 63.5 percent of the District's population was black and 68 percent was non-white. For Prince George's County, those proportions were 62 percent and 69 percent, respectively. The communities with the next highest percentages of African-American residents were Alexandria (26.8 percent), Charles County (21.2 percent), and Montgomery County (15.8 percent).

Between 1990 and 1996, all of the jurisdictions in the region except the District, saw an explosive growth of African-American, Latino, Asian, and immigrant families.

According to Grier's tables here and in the Appendix, between 1990 and 1996, the District lost 11 percent of its population and 14 percent of its non-white population. The total population of Arlington and Alexandria rose 3.3 percent during this period, while the number of minorities grew by 28 percent. Alexandria, in particular, saw its non-white population leap to 40.5 percent in 1996.

Montgomery County's overall population and minority population grew by 8.4 percent and 36 percent, respectively. The percentage of non-white persons in the county jumped to almost 30 percent by 1996.

What This Means:

First, these trends demonstrate that the region is starkly divided by race. Even though the racial composition of many counties is changing, no other jurisdictions in the region have anything close to the percentages of minority families found in Washington, D.C. and Prince George's County. There is no denying that, with 70 percent of the area's black population residing in the District and Prince George's County, this is a racially segregated region. While the reasons for the racial divide are not clear, many studies have documented that the segregation of African-Americans across the country has remained high. In *American Apartheid,* authors Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton found that segregation levels were almost as high for affluent and middle-class blacks as for poor blacks, and that blacks were more segregated than other racial groups, even if those other groups were mostly poor. For instance, in 1980, in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, wealthy African-Americans were more segregated than poor Hispanics.

Some have wondered whether the eastward migration of Washington area African- Americans is related to job growth in Howard and Anne Arundel counties. According to the latest commuting patterns from the Washington Council of Governments, the answer is no. Even the most mobile of workers, those with cars, primarily travel to jobs within their jurisdiction of residence or to the adjacent county. For instance, in Montgomery County, 50 percent of commuters traveled to jobs within the county, 30 percent to Washington, D.C., 6 percent to Fairfax, and 1 percent to Howard. In Prince George's County, 41 percent of workers with cars drove to jobs within the county, 32 percent to the District, 8 percent to Montgomery, 4 percent to Fairfax, 3 percent to Ann Arundel, and 1.3 percent to Howard County.

Second, the Washington region is becoming increasingly diverse. The greatest growth in minority or non-white populations occurred in the inner ring suburbs and some newly developing counties, like Loudoun. Some of this is partly due to the high levels of immigration in this region. The Washington area is the fifth most popular destination point for immigrants to the U.S., most of whom are not moving into the city as their predecessors have, but are primarily locating in the suburbs.

The foreign-born residents of the Washington region have a wide range of educational backgrounds, resources, and earning power. In 1970, one in 22 residents in the Washington region were foreign born; today, it is one in six. The community around Columbia Pike in South Arlington (zipcode 22204) has the largest concentrations of immigrants in the metropolitan area. The Aspen Hill-Silver Spring-Wheaton community in Maryland (zip 20906) is the region's most internationally diverse.

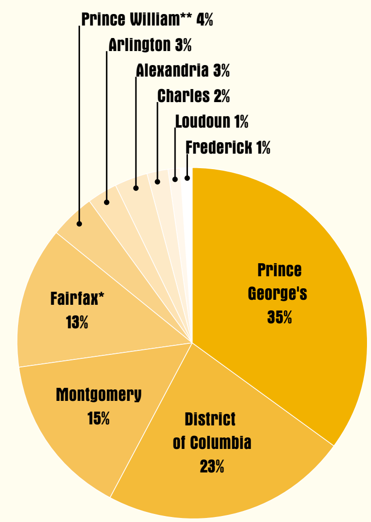
Percent of Population by Race and Jurisdiction in the Washington Metropolitan Area, 1990 and 1996

	White		Blacks		Asian/ Pacific Is.		Other		Non-White	
	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996
Central City										
District of Columbia	29.6%	32.2%	65.9%	63.5%	1.9%	1.7%	2.7%	2.6%	70.4%	67.8%
Core Suburbs										
Alexandria	69.2%	59.5%	22.1%	26.8%	4.2%	7.8%	4.5%	6.0%	30.8%	40.5%
Arlington	76.5%	72.5%	10.5%	10.9%	6.8%	7.3%	6.2%	9.3%	23.5%	27.5%
Total Core Suburbs	73.6%	67.3%	15.1%	17.2%	5.8%	7.5%	5.6%	8.0%	26.4%	32.7%
“Big Three” Inner Suburbs										
Fairfax*	81.6%	77.1%	7.6%	9.4%	8.3%	10.4%	2.4%	3.1%	18.4%	22.9%
Montgomery	76.8%	70.9%	12.2%	15.8%	8.2%	8.9%	2.8%	4.5%	23.2%	29.1%
Prince George’s	43.1%	31.0%	50.7%	61.9%	3.8%	3.9%	2.4%	3.1%	56.9%	69.0%
Total “Big Three”	68.0%	60.9%	22.6%	27.7%	6.9%	7.9%	2.5%	3.6%	32.0%	39.1%
Outer Suburbs										
Charles	79.3%	75.3%	18.2%	21.2%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	2.6%	20.7%	24.7%
Frederick	93.3%	91.4%	5.3%	5.8%	0.9%	1.5%	0.5%	1.3%	6.7%	8.6%
Loudoun	89.5%	86.4%	7.3%	7.1%	2.4%	4.0%	0.8%	2.5%	10.5%	13.6%
Prince William**	83.6%	79.9%	11.3%	13.6%	3.2%	3.6%	1.9%	3.0%	16.4%	20.1%
Total Outer Suburbs	86.2%	83.1%	10.3%	11.7%	2.1%	2.6%	1.2%	2.4%	13.8%	16.8%
Metro Area Total	**65.1%**	**61.4%**	**27.0%**	**28.9%**	**5.3%**	**6.1%**	**2.6%**	**3.5%**	**34.9%**	**38.5%**

**Fairfax data includes the Cities of Falls Church and Fairfax.*
***Prince William data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: 1980, 1998 U.S. Census of Population; Grier, George, “Washington Area Growth and Change,” 1998.

Share of Racial and Ethnic Minority Population by Jurisdiction, 1996



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Source: 1990 - U.S. Census of Population; 1996 - Greater Washington Consumer Survey. Analyzed and computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, “Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990's,” 1998.

The School Divide: Class

The Trend:

In 1997, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County had 32 percent of the region's public school students, but 55 percent of the region's low-income public school students.

According to Orfield, in 1997, approximately 31 percent of the region's elementary and secondary school students were eligible for free and reduced cost meals. However, four school districts in the region had a higher percentage of students eligible for lunch subsidies than the area's average—the District of Columbia (73.4 percent), Alexandria (51.2 percent), Arlington (42.7 percent), and Prince George's (40.8 percent).

In 1996, 75 public schools in the region had over 75 percent of their students qualify for free and reduced cost meals (shown in the red flags on the map). While most of these schools were located in the District, three were in the inner-ring suburbs: one in the Kentlands community of Prince George's County (75.2 percent), one in south Arlington (76.5 percent), and the other near the edge of Adelphi in Montgomery County (80.4 percent).

There were 53 public schools in the region that drew between 54.2 percent and 73.5 percent of their students from poor families (orange flags). Of these schools, 39 (or 74 percent) were located in older suburban neighborhoods, primarily in Arlington (9 schools) and Prince George's County (20 schools). The schools with almost one-third to one-half of their students from low-income households were found in Fairfax and Montgomery counties (marked by yellow flags).

What This Means:

Information about students eligible for free and reduced-cost meals gives a finer and more accurate picture of the socioeconomic health of different neighborhoods within large jurisdictions than do other indicators for three reasons.

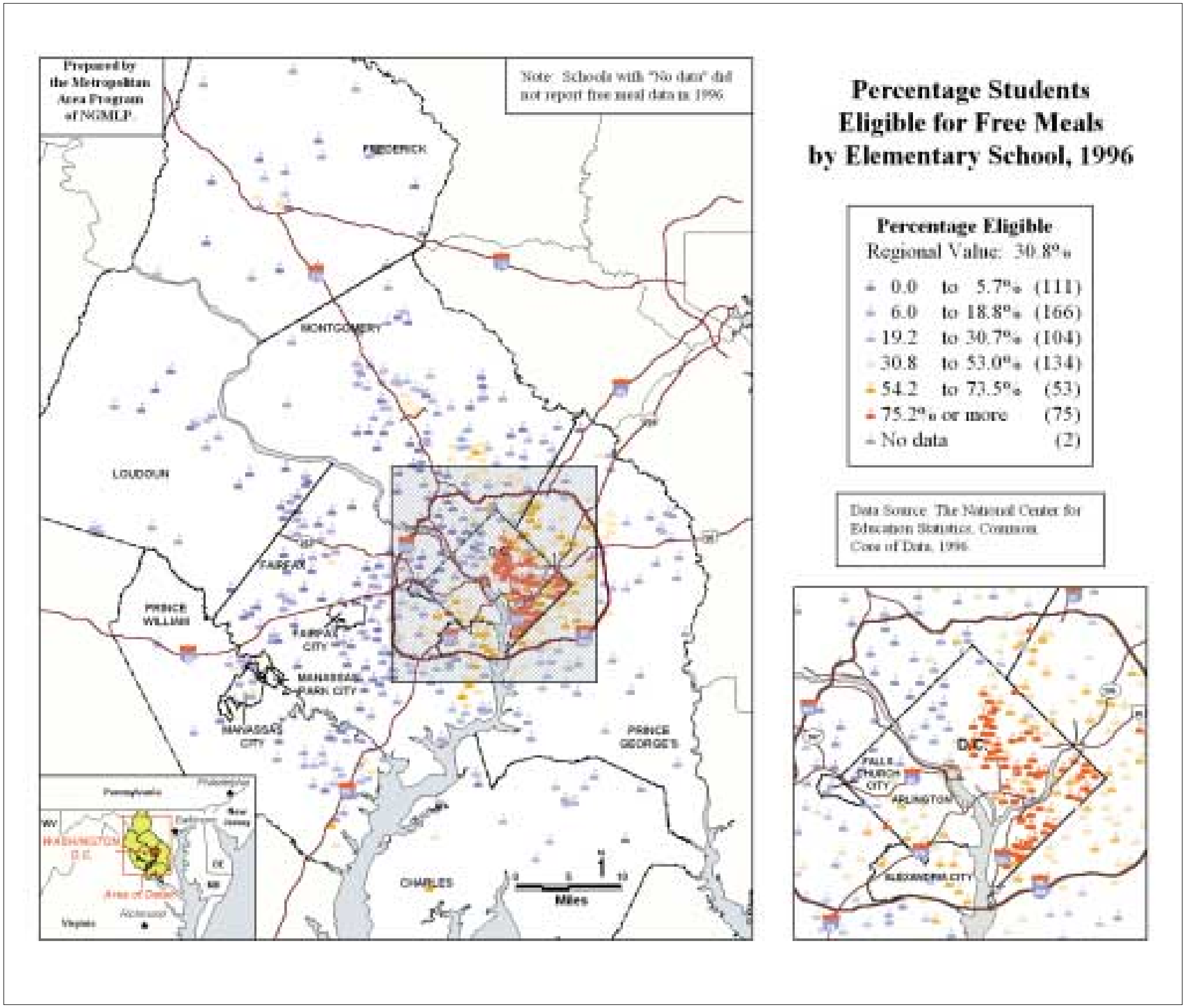
First, federal lunch subsidies may be a more reliable measure of distress than the poverty level, simply because the poverty level is very low: $16,276 for a family of four as of 1997. A focus on only those families officially below the poverty level ignores the other families earning slightly more who are subject to many of the same difficulties as the officially poor. Therefore relying on poverty levels underestimates the amount of distress in a community or in a school population. In order for students to be eligible for reduced cost meals, their families' income level must not be above 185 percent of the federal poverty level. For the 1999-2000 school year, children in a Maryland family of four earning up to $21,710 are eligible for free meals, while those whose family income is less than $30,895 annually receive reduced cost lunches.

Second, school populations more or less mirror the populations of the neighborhoods in which the schools are located. Thus, individual school level data is a finer measure of a community's health than jurisdiction-wide figures (Prince George's County is probably an exception: its court-ordered busing system, which ended in 1998, somewhat weakened the neighborhood-school link.)

Third, schools with high proportions of low-income students have a significant impact on where families with children choose to live. As Myron Orfield wrote in one of his first metropolitan area studies: "Deepening poverty and other socioeconomic changes show up in schools before they do neighborhoods.... Elementary school enrollment patterns therefore sound an early warning of impending flight by the middle class, the first group to leave a neighborhood when schools fail. Perceived school quality is a key factor in attracting or retaining middle-class residents (and the businesses that cater to them), and thus in maintaining property values, which in turn fund schools—in a potentially vicious cycle."

In particular, there is a strong correlation between high percentages of low-income students in a school and poor performance in standardized tests. In 1999, the *Washington Post* amassed and published test scores for all elementary schools in the region. A review of this data shows that in the District, for example, the ten public elementary schools with the largest fraction of students scoring "below basic" levels on the math and reading sections of the Stanford 9 test (for the 1997-98 school year) had between 80 and 99.5 percent of their students qualifying for free or reduced-cost lunches. All but one of these schools were in Northeast and Southeast D.C. By contrast, the ten public elementary schools that performed best had between 1.4 and 44 percent of their students eligible for free or reduced-cost lunches. All of these schools were in the city's northwest quadrant.

Schools with high proportions of students from poor families are primarily concentrated in the eastern portion of the Washington region—in areas like the eastern part of the District, inner Prince George's County, and some portions of Arlington—but are starting to appear in parts of Montgomery County (alongside the I-270 corridor) and inner Fairfax County. This widening pattern of distress, particularly in the "big three" inner counties, threatens to push families out to the edges of the region, in search of better schools, which will accelerate the decline of older communities and exacerbate overcrowding problems in newly developed areas.



The School Divide: Race

The Trend:

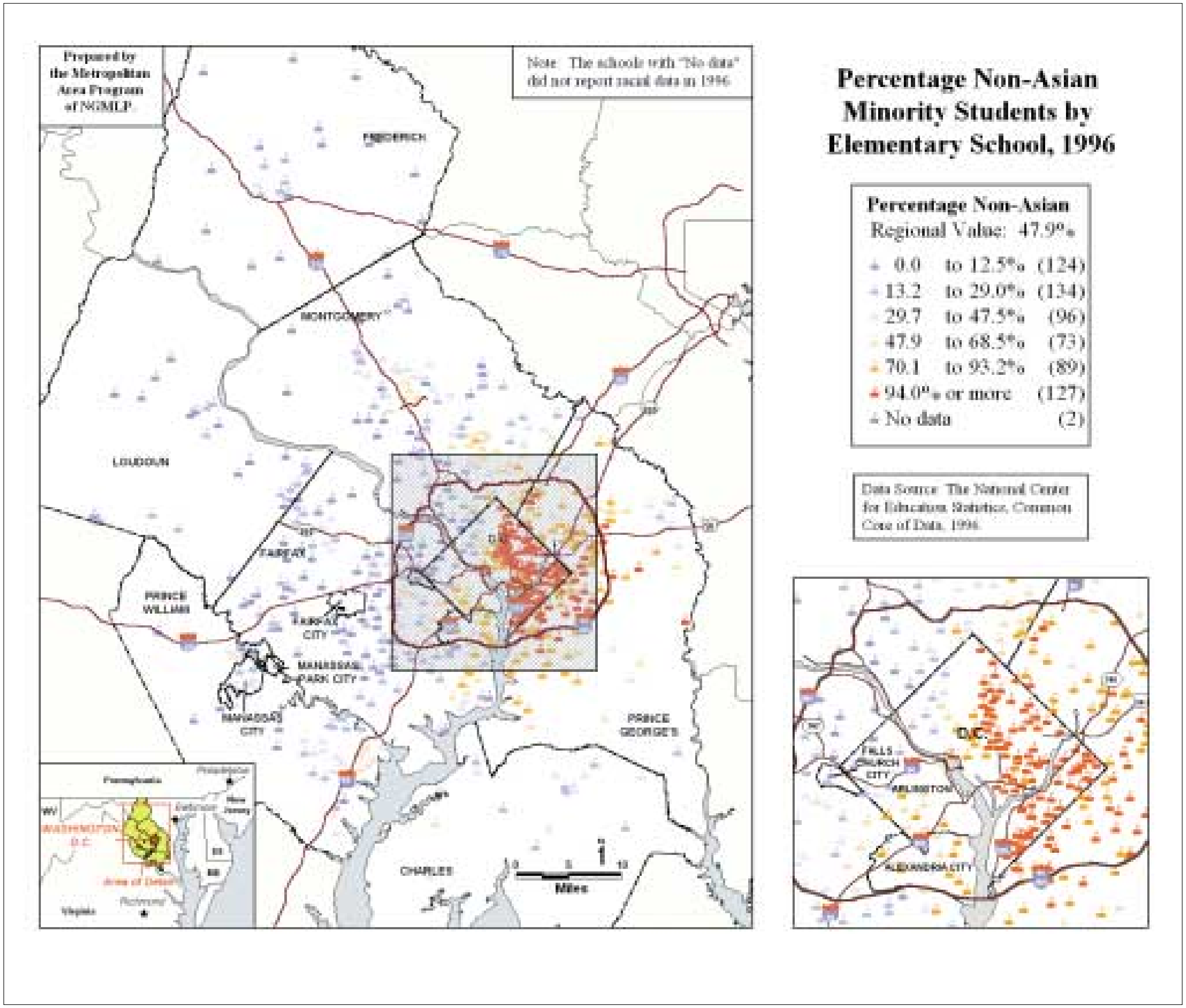
In 1997, the District of Columbia and Prince George's County had 32 percent of the region's public elementary school population but 62 percent of the region's black and Latino public elementary school students.

In 1997, 45 percent of the region's public elementary schools—or 289 schools—had a student body that was 48 percent or more African-American and Latino. As demonstrated in Orfield's map, there is nearly a straight line down the middle of Washington, D.C., separating those schools with high minority populations from those with almost no black or Latino students. The bulk of the schools with large numbers of non-Asian minority students are in the District, Prince George's County, Arlington, and Alexandria, but a number are also found outside of the Capital Beltway.

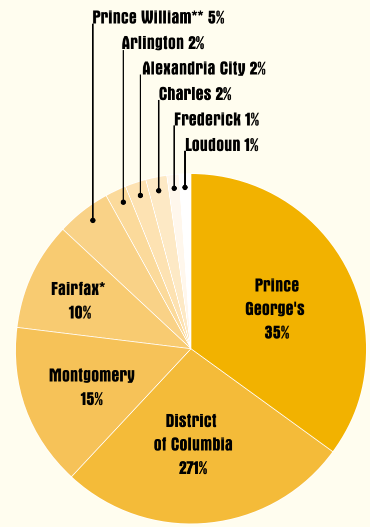
What This Means:

In the eastern half of the District, in the inner part of Prince George's County, and in parts of Arlington and Alexandria, poverty and race are intertwined. This is also true for select neighborhoods in Fairfax and Montgomery counties. This map and the map tracking students eligible for free and reduced cost meals—both of which document each public school in the region—are nearly identical. The schools with poor children are also the schools with minority children. These schools struggle to create an effective learning environment for students from distressed families, but they face enormous difficulties. Families with resources, reluctant to keep their children in schools with large numbers of poor children, move away in search of more solidly middle-class schools. This flight of middle-class families from distressed schools only accelerates decline in the neighborhood overall, further weakening communities that are on the edge of instability.

The poverty and race link is broken in the section of Prince George's County that lies beyond the Beltway. The schools in this section of the county educate mostly middle-class, black children. The map thus affirms one positive and one disturbing fact about this region. First, there is a thriving black middle-class here. Second, this region is starkly divided along racial lines—and this divide is even sharper than the class division.



School Districts' Share of Washington Region's Total Number of Non-Asian Minority Elementary School Students, 1997



*Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.
**Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.

Source: 1990 - U.S. Census of Population; 1996 - Greater Washington Consumer Survey. Analyzed and computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990's," 1998.

The Job Divide

The Trend:

A growing share of the region's jobs are located outside of the District of Columbia and beyond the Capital Beltway.

According to a recent Urban Institute study, as of June 1998, the District had 24 percent of the region's jobs, while the suburbs outside of the Capital Beltway were home to half of all regional jobs and two-thirds of all suburban jobs.

The District's share of regional employment dropped from one-third in 1990 to one-fourth in 1998.

Between 1985 and 1995, the western counties gained jobs faster than the rest of the Washington region.

Orfield's first map on the facing page compares the rate of job growth in 20 major employment centers in the Washington region to the metropolitan average rate of job growth, with an index score of 1.0 as the regional average.

Five job centers either lost jobs or grew more slowly than the rest of the employment centers in the region: Downtown D.C.; Crystal City/Pentagon City/Alexandria; Bethesda/Chevy Chase; Downtown Silver Spring, and Central Prince George's County.

The fastest growing job centers in the Washington region are located in the west, northwest, and southwest, in Tysons Corner and Reston/Herndon in Virginia and Rockville and Gaithersburg-Germantown in Maryland.

The District and the suburbs inside the Capital Beltway still have some of the area's highest concentrations of employment.

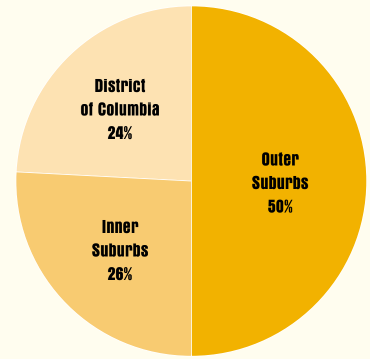
Orfield's second map shows employment per 100 persons, per CAD (COG analysis district) zone as of 1995. It shows that employment is most densely concentrated in the District of Columbia's downtown area, in inner-ring suburbs such as Arlington and Alexandria, and in communities that border the Capital Beltway, like Greenbelt, Maryland, and Tyson's Corner, Virginia.

What This Means:

The region's most significant job growth and the biggest proportion of jobs are found not only in the western part of the metropolitan area, but also outside of the Capital Beltway.

As Urban Institute's Mark Rubin and Margery Austin Turner have written, "The District's declining share of the region's jobs reflects three important trends. First, many types of economic activity simply follow population, since individual households are their primary customers. Thus, as population grows in the suburbs, the number of suburban grocery stores, dry cleaners, gas stations, schools, and libraries grow as well, inevitably increasing suburban employment totals. In addition, many of the region's new businesses have located in the suburbs, even if they do not serve a primarily residential customer base. For example, the dramatic growth in high-tech businesses over the last decade has brought a large number of new firms to Northern Virginia, not to the District of Columbia. And finally, many employers have left the District of Columbia for

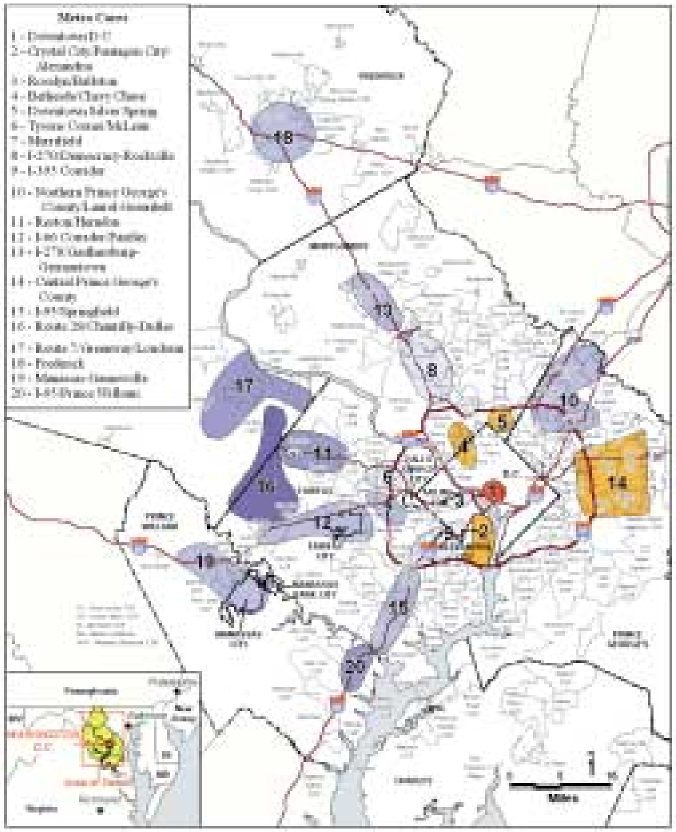
Job Location in the Washington Region, 1998



suburban locations over recent decades, some following the "pull" of residential suburbanization and others responding to the perceived "push" of burdensome regulations, high taxes, and ineffective public services within the city."

The first map also shows that job growth centers are located along major highways in the region, such as I-270, I-66, I-395, and the Dulles toll road and its extension to Leesburg. Yet, the areas with the most significant employment growth are not necessarily the areas that have the densest concentration of jobs.

Growth in Employment, 1985-1995



Fair Share Growth Index

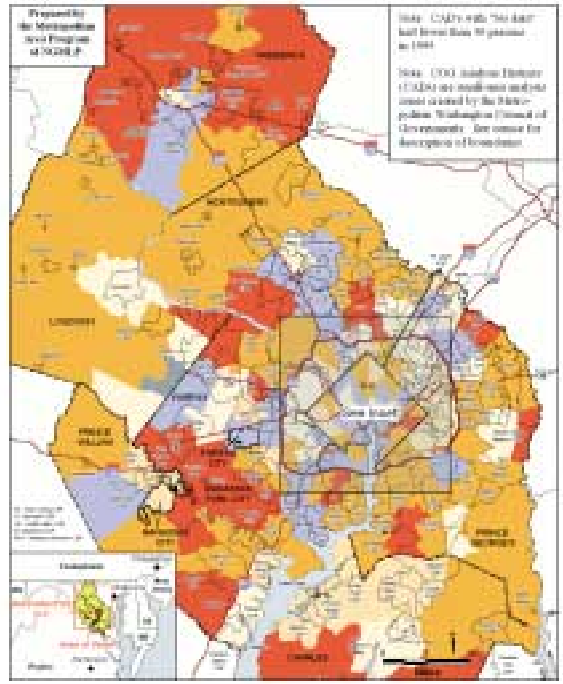
	0.34	(1)
	0.61 to 0.82	(4)
	1.30 to 1.74	(4)
	2.01 to 2.72	(7)
	4.91 to 7.34	(3)
	9.73	(1)

Note: The Fair Share Growth Index compares the relative growth of metro cores within a given metropolitan region, regardless of their absolute size. The metropolitan region as a whole is assigned an index value of 1.00; cores with values below 1.00 are growing slower than the region as a whole, while those with values above 1.00 are growing faster.

Data Sources: Robert Charles Lesser & Co., Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments

Prepared by the Metropolitan Area Program of NGMLP.

Employment per 100 Persons by CAD Zone, 1995



Employment per 100 Persons
Regional Value: 62.5

	2.7 to 13.6	(36)
	14.5 to 30.5	(44)
	32.0 to 46.4	(26)
	48.4 to 61.3	(26)
	62.5 to 285.2	(51)
	378.4 or more	(11)
	No data	(6)

Data Sources: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Department of Human Services, Planning and Public Safety, 1996.
Round 5.1 Cooperative Forecasting: Population and Household Forecasts to 2020 by COG Analysis Zone
and
Round 5.1 Cooperative Forecasting: Employment Forecasts to 2020 by COG Analysis Zone

The Transportation Divide

The Trend:

Of the $2.8 billion spent on major highway improvements in the Washington suburbs between 1988 and 1998, 10 percent of the public funds went to improving roads inside the Capital Beltway, while 80 percent went to roads outside of the Beltway.

The remaining 10 percent of highway spending went toward fixing up the Capital Beltway itself. Transportation spending data for the District of Columbia were not available.

The attached map provided by Orfield shows only those highway improvement projects (not maintenance) that spent more than $3 million widening roads, replacing bridges, building new roads, and expanding or enhancing major interchanges outside of the District. Of the $2.8 billion spent on highway improvements, the most expensive projects—those costing over $100 million—were all outside of the Beltway. They included work on: I-95 from the District to the edge of Prince William County ($341 million); I-270 from the Beltway through Montgomery County ($277 million); US-50 in Prince George's County ($241 million); I-66 through Fairfax and Prince William counties ($160 million); and I-370 in Montgomery County ($147 million).

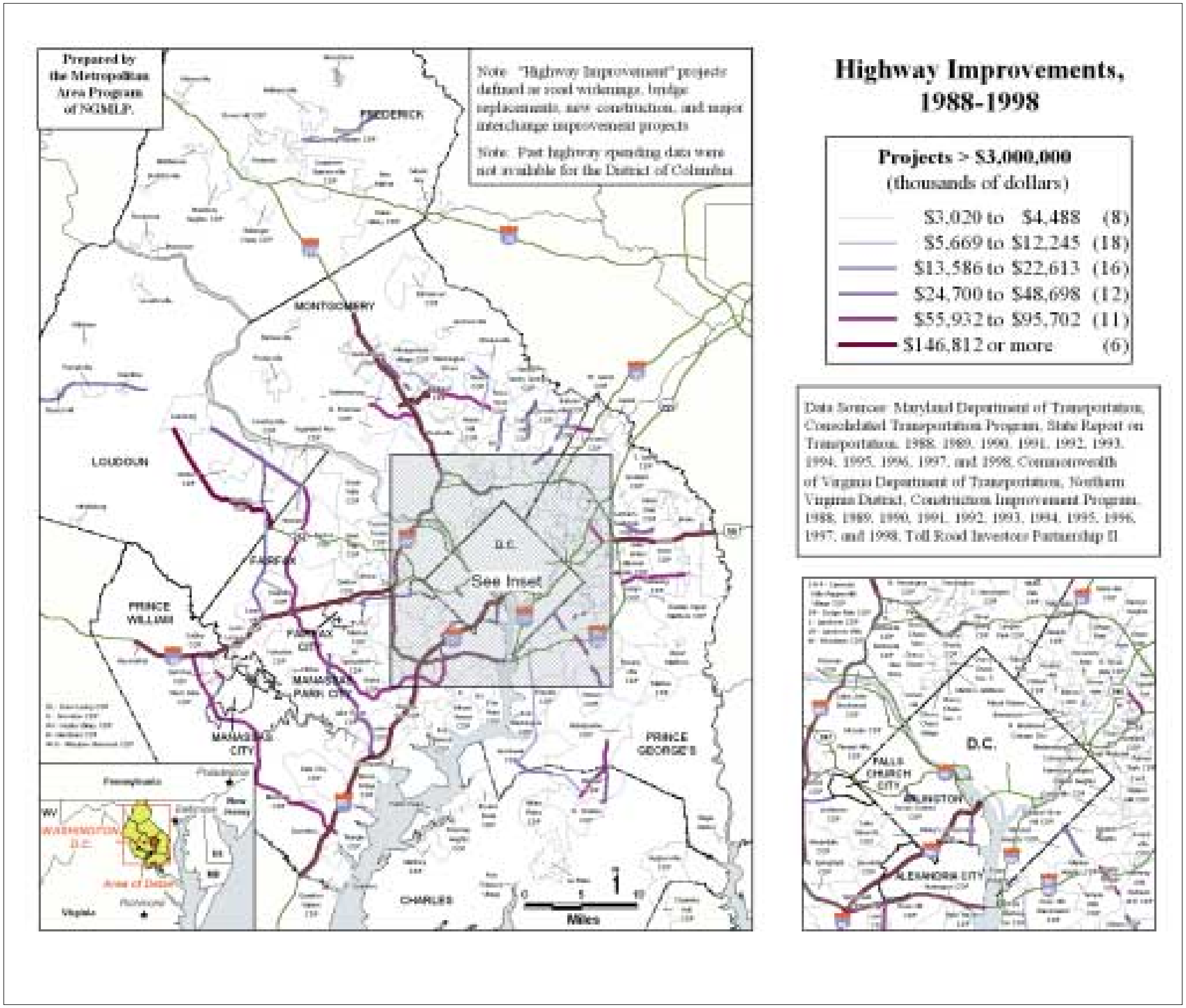
What This Means:

Since transportation expenditures were not available for the District of Columbia, rough estimates on mass transit spending, particularly on projects within the Capital Beltway, were collected to try to get a more honest account of total spending patterns in the region. According to estimates from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and media reports, approximately $2.4 billion was spent on expanding the Metrorail line inside the Beltway between 1988 and 1998. This sum includes funding spent on completed and ongoing efforts to add three new Metro stations on the Green Line, one station on the Red Line, and the recently completed Van Dorn/Franconia-Springfield station on the Blue Line, which borders the Beltway. Other major transportation expenditures not accounted for in the District include the bridge replacement of Whitehurst Freeway and the improvements on the Southwest and Anacostia freeways.

In the absence of more concrete data, it appears that if there is a transportation divide in this region, it arises from the fact that highway monies are primarily going to the farther out suburbs while transit spending is staying in the core. However, it is more important for communities to understand how these different types of investments—highway versus mass transit—affect growth and opportunities in their communities.

The connection between highway spending and growth is unclear—economists differ on whether highways spur growth or have no effect on development. As shown in the maps, the patterns of job growth and highway spending in the Washington region are parallel. Fast-growing job centers are located along I-66, I-395, I-270 corridor, the Dulles Toll Road and the new Greenway extension to Leesburg (the only highway project on the chart that was made possible by private funding)—all of which were either built, widened, or substantially improved in the past 10 years.

Yet, despite all these highway investments, the highest concentrations of jobs are found in employment centers located in the central city, in Arlington and Alexandria, and around the Capital Beltway.

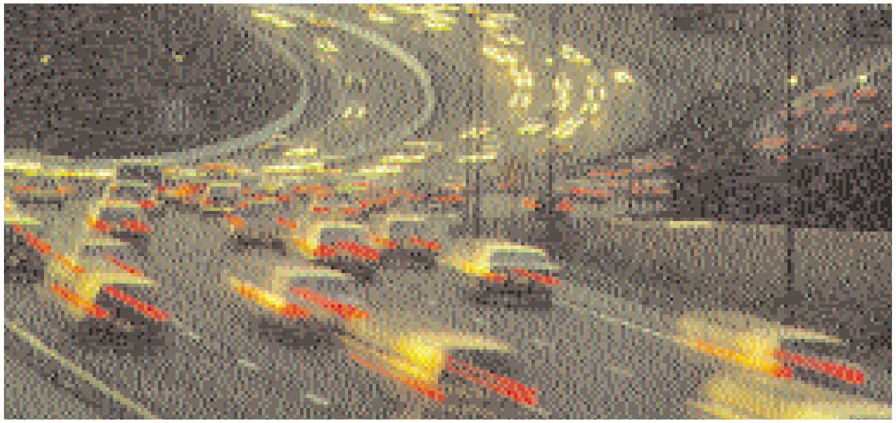

Highway Improvements, 1988-1998
Prepared by the Metropolitan Area Program of NGMLP.
Note: "Highway Improvement" projects defined as road widenings, bridge replacements, new construction, and major interchange improvement projects
Note: Past highway spending data were not available for the District of Columbia
Projects > $3,000,000 (thousands of dollars)
$3,020 to $4,488 (8)
$5,669 to $12,245 (18)
$13,586 to $22,613 (16)
$24,700 to $48,698 (12)
$55,932 to $95,702 (11)
$146,812 or more (6)
Data Sources: Maryland Department of Transportation, Consolidated Transportation Program, State Report on Transportation, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998. Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Transportation, Northern Virginia District, Construction Improvement Program, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998. Toll Road Investors Partnership II
FREDERICK
MONTGOMERY
LOUDOUN
FAIRFAX
PRINCE WILLIAM
MANASSAS CITY
MANASSAS PARK CITY
FAIRFAX CITY
D.C.
See Inset
PRINCE GEORGE'S
CHARLES
Miles
WASHINGTON D.C.
Area of Detail
D.C.
FALLS CHURCH CITY
ARLINGTON
ALEXANDRIA CITY

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DIVIDE

The greater Washington region has robust growth in the western half and not enough growth in large portions of the eastern half. The result is an uneven set of opportunities for families and businesses in the region. But the fast-growing areas are not clear winners from this pattern of growth and development. While they have welcomed the boost to their economies, these communities have also learned that explosive growth comes with a price.

TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN THE WASHINGTON REGION HAS WORSENED IN THIS PERIOD OF RAPID GROWTH. Concern about congestion, and the time it robs from families, businesses and individuals, comes from all quarters—workers getting to area jobs, parents running errands, trucks making local or cross-state deliveries, and travelers en route to other destinations. Traffic jams are also no longer limited to weekday rush hours, but occur during lunch time and weekends as well. Since 1996, the Washington region has been deemed the second most congested metropolitan area in the country, lagging only behind Los Angeles. This ranking is up (or down) from 1983, when the Washington region was ranked fifth among major U.S. metropolitan areas for its congested roadways. The region also ranked first in 1996 for the number of hours a person wastes sitting in traffic.

EXPLOSIVE GROWTH HAS EXACERBATED THE PROBLEM OF OVERCROWDED AND CRUMBLING SCHOOLS IN THE REGION. Nearly all school districts, except for the District of Columbia's, have reported that they need to build additional schools to relieve overcrowding in classrooms and to accommodate future growth in their student populations. Loudoun County projects needing 22 new schools in the next 6 years; Prince George's County needs 26 new schools in the next 10 years. Fairfax County has 14,000 students learning in 550 trailers. In addition to needing more classrooms, the "big three" suburban counties are also seeking additional funds to renovate older schools.



OVERBUILDING AT THE METROPOLITAN FRINGE HAS LED TO A DECADE OF STAGNANT HOUSING PRICES AND PROPERTY VALUES. The over-construction of low-priced new homes in Washington's outlying suburbs, coupled with a glut of townhouses and condominiums, has kept the selling prices of similar suburban homes down and overall property values in the region stagnant. Sellers in these markets are losing or barely breaking even on their homes, while recent home-buyers, many of whom moved out to these communities in search of affordable first homes, are seeing their investments plummet in value.

Despite the high rate of home sales in the late 1990s, home values in the metropolitan area, except for Washington, D.C., and Arlington, have remained flat. For instance, while sales of new single family homes in Northern Virginia rose by nearly 22 percent between 1997 and 1998, the assessed home values in the counties of Fairfax and Loudoun grew by only one percent. According to the latest local real estate reports, home values in the area's other major jurisdictions, Montgomery and Prince George's counties, also increased by less than one percent.

Some local officials are raising property taxes to help pay for more services and schools, which are needed because of new growth. Places like Montgomery, Loudoun, and Prince William counties are struggling to find ways to pay for more services and schools to meet the demands of their new residents, business owners, and companies. This is especially frustrating in Virginia because, unlike in Maryland, local jurisdictions by law are not allowed to access income tax revenues, which have leapt thanks to the thriving economy (the State of Maryland realized a budget surplus in 1999 as a result of the growth in income tax revenues). Instead, Virginia suburbs must rely on property taxes as a primary source of local revenue. With sluggish real estate values, counties in Virginia are stuck with a large tab and a small pocketbook. While local leaders have appealed to their state legislators for more resources, they have also incrementally raised property taxes, in part to help pay for growth (property taxes have risen in most Northern Virginia suburbs to make up for the drop in property values during the recession of the early 1990s). Prince William County now has the highest real estate tax of any jurisdiction in Virginia, and Loudoun County's tax rate—up 20 percent in the last decade—is projected to rise in coming years. Arlington has raised taxes in part to help pay for the changing school needs of their growing immigrant school population.

Extraordinary growth, particularly in the technology sector, has created many high-skilled jobs but not enough workers to fill them. Business leaders from across the region are struggling to find workers in this extremely tight labor market. Private sector firms are reporting that job postings are staying up for extended periods of time with few responses from qualified candidates. The high-tech industry, both nationally and in the Washington region, is the sector straining the most under these conditions of extremely low unemployment (the suburban unemployment rate in Washington dipped below 2 percent by April 1999). According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the nation will need at least 1.3 million new information technology workers between 1996 and 2006. According to Potomac KnowledgeWays, Northern Virginia alone has 19,000 unfilled technology jobs that represent $1 billion in unearned wages.

Growth creates environmental strains, which threaten the region's high quality of life. From 1970 to 1990, the population of the Washington region increased by 35.5 percent, while the amount of land used for urbanized purposes (houses, shopping centers, office buildings, parking lots, etc) increased by 95.7 percent, or almost 2 and a half times as fast. In the 1980s, the region lost more than 200,000 acres—or the equivalent of five District of Columbias—of farmlands, forest, and wetlands. According to current pace-of-growth projections, Loudoun County will lose the equivalent of four football fields of open space every day over the next 30 years. Each additional acre of paved surface sends 30,000 gallons of water per inch of rain into the nearest waterway. In the watershed area of the Chesapeake Bay, one of this region's natural treasures, there will be more development between 1990 and 2020 than there was between 1608 and 1950—and much of that development will be in the Washington metropolitan area.

The region's air quality is also diminishing, in part because of the increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), in part because of the additional power plants and industrial sites that serve the region's growing population. The metropolitan area's VMT is estimated to jump jump 179 percent in the next twenty years. The American Lung Association estimates that at any given time more than 400,000 people in the metropolitan region are considered chronically at-risk from air pollution—almost 60,000 of them children with pediatric asthma.

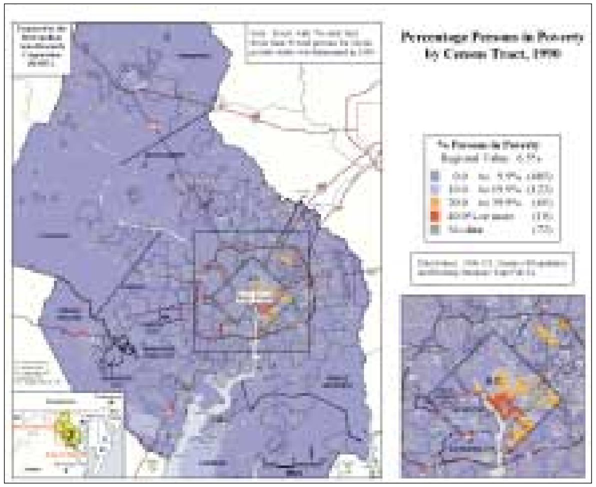
The Full Picture: A Region Divided

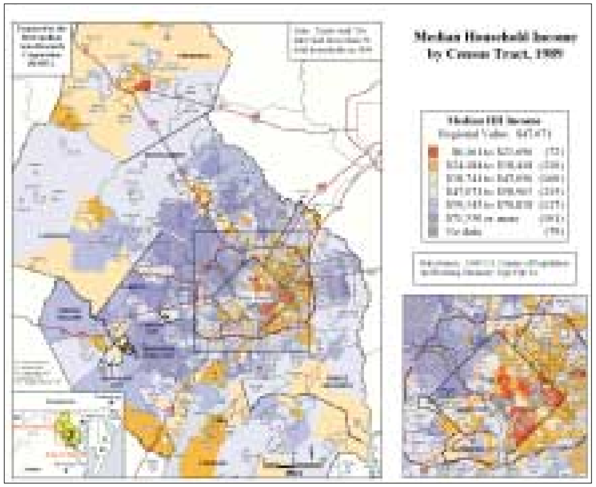
In sum, the twin consequences of growth in the greater Washington region, with hyper development on one hand and social distress on the other, have resulted in a region that is starkly divided. A slightly right-tilted line that cuts down the center of Washington, D.C. splits the region into east and west halves.

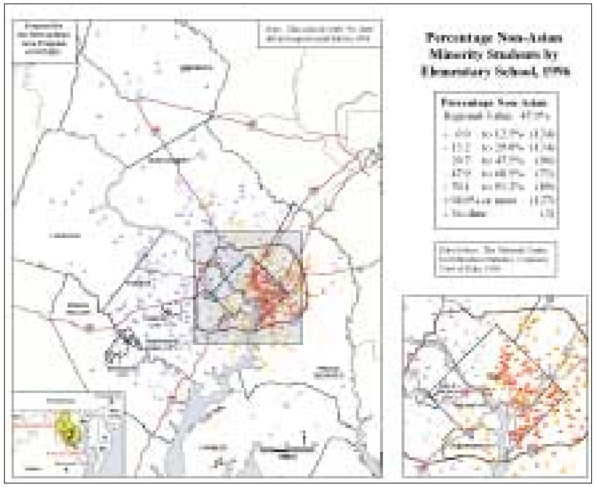
These maps recap the story, and the mismatch is visibly glaring. The orange and red spots, indicating distress, heavily dot the eastern portion of the region, in nearly the exact same places on each of the maps. The orange and red are primarily found in eastern D.C., the inner part of Prince George's County, and portions of Arlington and Alexandria. The exceptions are the signs of distress in parts of inner Fairfax County, up I-270 in Montgomery County, and some parts of the outlying suburbs.

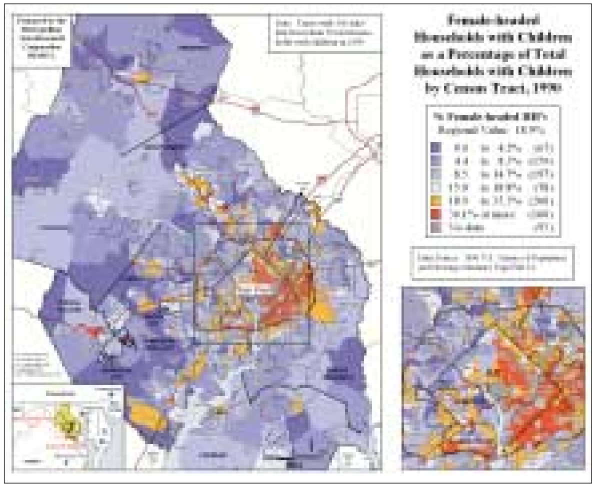
The blue spots, indicating wealth and opportunity, primarily paint the western half of the Washington region. These include large parts of Fairfax, Loudoun, Frederick. and Montgomery counties. The exceptions in the east are the far eastern and southern portions of Prince George's and Charles counties outside of the Beltway that have more stable neighborhoods.

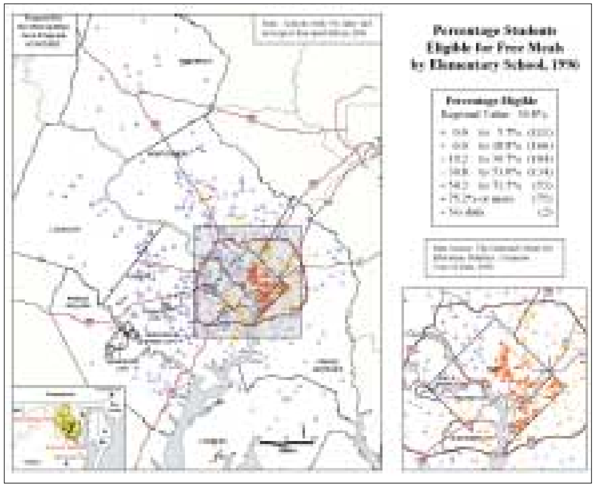
There is no denying the social and economic opportuniy divide in the Washington region.

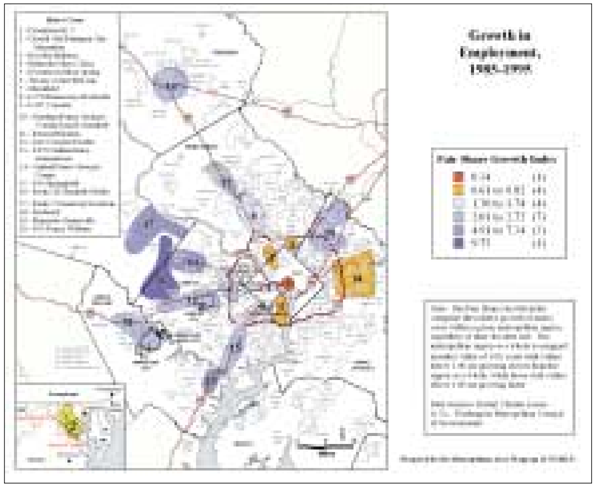












Pulling It All Together

The statistics, charts, and maps presented in this report tell a compelling story about the current state of the Washington, D.C. region. The story is partly about a wealthy region, blessed with a wide array of natural and economic assets. Yet it is also a story about a region divided by race, class, ethnicity and opportunity. The maps show a region out-of-balance, struggling with the consequences of very little growth on one side and an extraordinary amount on the other. The following conclusions are inescapable:

1. **The eastern portion of this region bears the burden of poverty.** Washington, D.C. and Prince George's County bear the highest costs—fiscally and socially—of housing the region's poorest families and children. Even affluent households in northwest Washington and east Prince George's County cannot escape the price of higher poverty, which they pay in higher taxes and reduced services. Arlington County and Alexandria also have a relatively large proportion of low-income and working families.

2. **The western part of the region enjoys most of the fruits of prosperity.** Wealth and prosperity primarily benefit those living west and north of the central city, in Fairfax, Montgomery, and Loudoun counties as well as other communities outside of the Capital Beltway. These jurisdictions have high proportions of their residents earning more than $50,000 and have become the location of choice for new firms.

3. **The divisions in this region cannot be explained as "city versus suburb."** Because the rough dividing line cuts through many counties and the central city itself, the region cannot be described as strong suburbs surrounding a weak city, nor even as strong outer suburbs ringing a weak urban and inner suburban core. Many sections of the District and inner suburban communities are facing economic and social challenges, but the other parts of the District and those suburbs are affluent.

4. **This region is starkly divided by race.** There is no denying the presence of racial segregation in this region: 70 percent of the area's African-American residents live in Washington, D.C., and Prince George's County. The racial divisions are in part, but not entirely, class divisions. In this region, as in so many others, poverty and race are intertwined. The areas with higher poverty rates and more schoolchildren receiving free or reduced cost lunches are areas where black and Latino families live. Not all minority families in the region are poor—there is a thriving African-American middle-class in the portion of Prince George's County outside the Beltway. But it is true that African-American families of all income levels tend to live in the eastern portion of the region, while whites live in the western half. Mitigating this division somewhat is the expanded diversity of the Washington region, with increasing numbers of blacks, recent immigrants, and other minorities living throughout the metropolitan area.

5. **These polarizing patterns hurt fast-growing counties.** Growth is not only a concern of the neighborhoods that are struggling economically and losing residents. Fast-growing counties are straining to provide new schools, services, and infrastructure while preserving open space and protecting the environment. Of all of the area's jurisdictions, Prince George's County is in the toughest bind; it must deal with both the high costs of social distress in inner Beltway communities and the high costs of new growth elsewhere in the county.

6. **The patterns of extensive growth in some communities and significantly less growth in others are inextricably linked.** Poor neighborhoods with high costs, low services, and poor- performing schools push out families with resources, who move to the edges of the region. As these families leave, so do jobs, services, and businesses. This flight, only further weakens already struggling neighborhoods and puts more pressures on other, fast-growing jurisdictions. Another factor pushing families to the outer edges of the metropolitan region and exacerbating the crowding and congestion there are the high housing prices in many affluent communities, including the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., North Arlington and other places on the west side of the region. Most families cannot afford to live in these expensive, centrally located neighborhoods, so they move to the region's edge, or remain in communities with cheaper housing.

EMERGING RESPONSE

The greater Washington area has a history of working collectively on region-wide concerns. In recent years, as a result of the booming economy, the challenges presented by growth have become a more pressing regional concern. "Slow growth", "smart growth", no roads, more roads, less construction, more classrooms, more workers, more funding—these and other subjects have taken center stage in local elections, public meetings, policy discussions, the media, and even in casual conversations. In response, numerous efforts and proposals have been put on the table—by local, regional, state, and even federal leaders—to try to address the symptoms of hyper growth. The efforts described below are a testament that there is a foundation from which true regional collaborations and reforms can emerge.

THE WASHINGTON REGION HAS SUCCESSFULLY CREATED A NUMBER OF FORMAL REGIONAL BODIES TO COORDINATE AND/OR OVERSEE THE TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND GENERAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA. Like most regions, the Washington area has created a handful of formal organizations—some by legislative mandate, others in response to regional crises—to address basic infrastructure and service needs that naturally span jurisdictional lines, such as water and sewer, air quality, and transportation. These formal governance and advisory bodies actually operate programs or monitor compliance with federal standards at a metropolitan level. They are:

- **METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS.** Known colloquially as the "Washington COG," this entity helps plan and coordinate housing, transportation, environmental, human services, and public safety policies and programs across 17 local jurisdictions in the region. Both the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board and the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (see below) are independent subsidiaries of COG. Formed in 1957 as an independent organization to promote regional coordination, COG was formally recognized as the official regional planning agency for the Washington metropolitan area in 1965.

- **NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD.** Formed in 1965, in response to the requirements of a 1962 federal highway act, the Transportation Planning Board (TRB) effectively serves as the Washington area's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation. The MPO develops the region's short- and long-term transportation plans and coordinates the area's transportation funding priorities.

- **METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE.** This Committee works with state and local officials to ensure that the Washington metropolitan area complies with federal standards for clean air in this region. The Committee was established in 1991 in accordance with the federal Clean Air Act of 1990.

- **Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.** The Transit Authority operates and manages the regional bus and Metrorail systems. The Authority was created in 1967 by Congress, the District, Maryland, and Virginia as an Interstate Compact.

- **Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.** The Airports Authority, an independent interstate agency, is responsible for managing, operating, and improving both the Dulles and Reagan Washington National airports. After Congress passed legislation in 1986 transferring the operation of Dulles and National airports to a regional body under a 50-year lease, the District City Council and the Virginia General Assembly enacted an interstate law creating the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

- **D.C. Water and Sewer Authority.** Established in 1996, the latest accomplishment in formal regional arrangements, the Authority is responsible for delivering water service to the District of Columbia and sewer service to the District, large portions of Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and some communities in Fairfax and Loudoun counties.

Jurisdictions in the region have also entered into formal contractual agreements to meet mutual needs. There are formal cross-jurisdictional agreements on water supply and distribution, sewage treatment, and solid waste disposal. Jurisdictions have also forged formal compacts on emergency services, including police, fire and rescue services.

In recent years, the regional dialogue has extended beyond governments and governmental bodies. A number of new regional coalitions—organized by business leaders, public leaders, and special interest groups—are actively engaged in growth and development issues. There are many organized voices in the region who are shaping the growth dialogue, such as developers, homebuilders, local chambers of commerce, environmental groups, and citizens' organizations. The following is a profile of some of the larger coalitions of leaders working towards solutions for the region.

- **The Board of Trade's Potomac Conference** is a project of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, which brings together the region's top business and government leaders to shape and implement an agenda for a healthier region. At the June 1999 gathering of the Potomac Conference, the area's "new economy" leaders released a regional plan to help make the greater Washington area a top global technology center. The Conference called for a series of steps, including: (1) creating a skilled workforce and a technology education curriculum in the region; (2) better supporting bioscience/ biotechnology growth in the region; (3) launching a message campaign that markets the region as the center of the new economy; and (4) improving the region's transportation system to enhance economic prosperity.

- **Coalition for Smarter Growth** is an alliance of prominent environmental and civic groups in the region, such as the Sierra Club, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the Piedmont Environmental Council, as well as some county-based citizens groups. The Coalition is dedicated to protecting the environment, the health of the District and its older suburbs, and main street businesses while stopping proposals that promote sprawl. The Coalition has influenced the outcome of such major growth and development efforts as the passage of Maryland's "smart growth" legislation and the defeat of Disney's history theme park in Prince William County.

- **Virginia Coalition of High Growth Communities** is a coalition of elected officials and activists from over 20 fast-growing communities in Virginia that pushes for growth management tools and reforms from the state. The Coalition's agenda includes requests to limit the construction of new homes in areas with inadequate schools and infrastructure and to impose fees on developers so they can help share the costs of growth. The Coalition also called for the state to share income tax revenues with the localities that generate these funds so they can pay for the costs of new schools, infrastructure, and services. These proposals were defeated in the last session of the Virginia General Assembly, but the Coalition intends to continue its campaign for more local powers to deal with growth.

To date, most regional and cross-jurisdictional discussions have focused on the negative consequences of rapid growth—traffic congestion, overcrowded schools, and the loss of open space. An array of regional and local groups and governments have put forth an array of transportation-related proposals; county-level growth management initiatives have also been crafted in an attempt to deal with clogged roads and slow the pace and lower the costs of rapid development. There is also increasing support for strengthening the region's workforce and better linking workers to jobs, particularly in the fast growing technology sector in the Washington suburbs.

- **Transportation—to ease traffic congestion and improve job access—remains the most hotly debated issue in the Washington region.** There are many proposals to increase transportation funding, speed up transportation planning, and expand or improve nearly every part of the regional highway system. There are heated debates about how to deal with estimated future transportation funding shortfalls in the states of Maryland and Virginia. Plans for the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge and the Inter County Connector are getting significant public attention. There are alternative proposals that call for smaller-scale infrastructure designs and better integration of land use and transportation decisions. There are mass transit proposals to upgrade the Metrorail system, to add new Metro stations and new lines in both the District and the suburbs, to create a transit option for Dulles Airport, and improve and extend bus services throughout the region. In Congress, U.S. Representative James Moran and Senator Charles Robb will reintroduce a bill to create a regional transportation authority that will give the current Transportation Planning Board expanded powers on transportation planning and spending decisions.

Most of these large scale efforts have been stalled due to lack of funding, complex coordination between regional, state, and federal actors, and the stalemate between the business community on one hand and citizen groups and environmentalists on the other. For every major proposed transportation project, there is an alternative concept. In short, nearly all major transportation investment decisions come with controversy.

- **States and counties within the region are also attempting to channel and cover more of the costs of rapid development, but they have very different sets of tools.** In Maryland, both Montgomery and Prince George's counties, for example, have taken steps to ease the development pressure in rural areas and encourage growth in established communities. Montgomery County has become nationally recognized for its policies of transferring development rights from rural to urbanized land and mandating mixed-income housing. Prince George's County recently imposed a four-year moratorium on development in areas where schools are overcrowded and has voted to raise impact fees on developers to help pay for new school construction. All these efforts are occurring in a state that is one of 12 in the country to have a growth management statute. Maryland is currently leading the charge to steer state road, sewer and school funds away from farms and open spaces to already developed areas targeted for growth.

The Virginia counties operate within a different construct. Neither the Governor nor the state legislature of Virginia have given counties a wide array of tools to manage, redirect, or slow growth. The 1999 session of the General Assembly denied counties the power to restrict new home construction in areas without sufficient roads and schools and to impose impact fees on developers. Virginian localities are also fiscally strapped because, unlike other states, they can not tax their residents' growth in income and wealth to help pay for services and school infrastructure.

- **There are early efforts to better coordinate and operate workforce development strategies at a regional level.** While most regional workforce efforts are in the planning stages or operating at a very small-scale, they are picking up steam. Two very different concerns drive the push for regional collaborations on workforce. First, welfare reform time limits and work participation requirements are pressuring local jurisdictions to move low-income persons into jobs—particularly those that pay a living wage. Second, the rapid growth of high tech jobs in suburban Virginia and Maryland have led to severe labor shortages in this high-skilled sector.

The twin pressures of welfare reform and suburban labor shortages are precipitating new strategies for improving skills training, job placement, transportation access, child care and other social support programs—and basic interjurisdictional coordination—to better meet the needs of both workers and employers in the region. For instance, COG and the Board of Trade/Potomac Conference have each taken steps to broaden the conversation around regional workforce issues, holding forums and releasing regional workforce plans that try to meet the disparate needs in this region. There are other efforts aimed at simply trying to improve information sharing and coordination between all the workforce development programs in the region, such as: (1) an initiative led by Wider Opportunities for Women and other groups to identify and remove barriers to work (e.g., child care, information, transportation) for low-skilled individuals; and (2) Potomac KnowledgeWay's recent effort to document every job training and employment source in the region, particularly those that support the high tech industry. Finally, there are also efforts aimed explicitly at connecting low-skilled, low-wage workers to available jobs throughout the region, such as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority-led effort to link transportation services to employment opportunities.

Efforts to reinvigorate slower growing communities are happening, but are not generally part of the regional debate. For the most part, the current regional dialogue has been driven by leaders in the fast-growing counties. The challenges of little growth in some communities have been seen by leaders in other jurisdictions as specifically urban or local—rather than regional—issues, even though the conditions of distressed communities have a powerful impact on the shape of growth in this metropolitan area. Many jurisdictions are working feverishly to improve public school performance, by hiring new superintendents and reforming the school system. Jurisdictions also continue to pursue economic development strategies to reinvigorate older or declining communities. For instance, the District has been aggressively pursuing a strategy of increasing businesses, retail, entertainment, and residential life in its downtown, much of which will be anchored by the new MCI Arena and the upcoming convention center. Montgomery County is about to break ground on major redevelopments in downtown Silver Spring and Bethesda. Last year, Prince George's County won a planned Circuit City distribution center. Both Arlington and Alexandria have attracted growth to neighborhoods along mass transit lines.

A regional action plan must link all these conversations, plans, proposals, and activities, embracing concerns that affect all jurisdictions and residents in the greater metropolitan area.

Where Do We Go From Here?

This report is the first in a series of reports on the state of the Washington, D.C. region and, more importantly, on the policies regional leaders can choose to adopt. This report is not meant to be comprehensive. It does not cover all aspects of regional life. The areas it does explore—social and economic trends—should be analyzed in greater depth, particularly after the release of the 2000 census.

We have deliberately avoided providing specific policy guidance on some of the major issues facing the region. We believe that it is more important at this stage of our region's development to have a clear understanding of the social, economic, and demographic trends affecting the Washington metropolitan area, and to describe regional issues in a broad, integrated way.

Yet the report does provide some general principles that should guide regional efforts to deal with growth in the future.

First, the region needs to focus on the full range of issues that shape its growth and development patterns. As explained in the previous section, current regional action focuses principally on the visible, negative consequences of explosive growth in the western part of the region and other suburbs—congestion, the decline in air quality, the loss of open space. That is not a bad thing. The fact that decision-makers, corporate leaders, and residents are all thinking about how best to grow is good news. There is increasing recognition that growth is desirable but, if left unfettered, has high costs. There is also increasing recognition that in thinking about growth and development, we must think regionally.

Yet, in our efforts to address the consequences of growth, we cannot ignore the forces that drive growth in some parts of the region and not in others. Poor schools in one jurisdiction push out families and lead to overcrowded schools in other places. A lack of affordable housing in thriving job centers leads to long commutes on crowded freeways for the region's working families. Expensive housing—out of the reach of most area households—in many close-in western neighborhoods creates pressures to pave over and build on open space in outlying areas, as people decide that they have to move outwards to build a future.

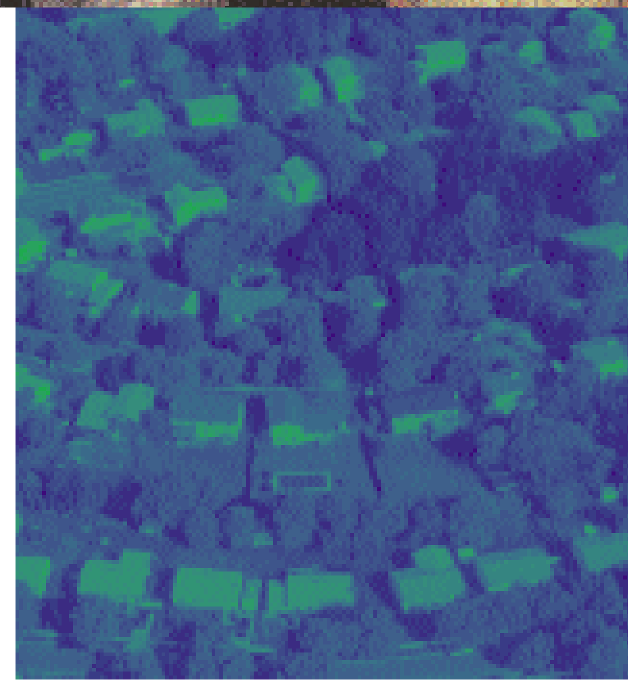
This is one metropolitan area, fundamentally linked by markets and roads and labor networks and media. The problems related to extensive, rapid growth in outer counties on the western side of the region—congestion, school overcrowding, rising property tax rates, loss of open space—are the flip side of problems caused by little growth and opportunity in most of the eastern part of the region—failing schools, economic isolation, lack of investment. As a region, we need to connect these issues. If we do not, our solutions to growth's challenges will be limited, at best.
By saying that the regional conversation should be broadened, we do not mean to condemn previous efforts at regional action. The Washington, D.C. region does collaborate on a range of issues, and the desire for regional action is growing in both the public and private sectors. Yet, again like most regions, we are more defined by our separateness and jealously guarded autonomy, than by any metropolitan form of governance and action.

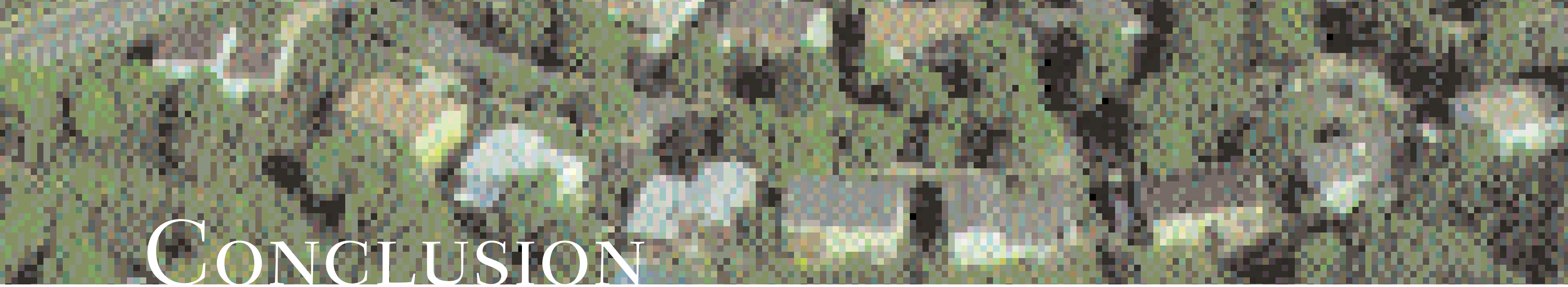
Second individual jurisdictions should understand and acknowledge how connected they are already. Regional interdependence and interconnection is a hard fact. When one county decides to place a moratorium on new home construction, neighboring counties must brace themselves for a likely influx of new residents; or, conversely, when one community goes on a development spree, nearby jurisdictions must grapple with additional traffic, pollution, and threats to open space. Calls for more regional coordination, cooperation, and discussion are simply the logical outgrowth of this understanding.

By saying this, we do not mean to suggest abolishing local control, or subjecting every local government decision to region-wide veto. We do think that local decision-makers need to keep regional dynamics in mind, and that regional decisions should respect local needs. The balance between local control and regional collaboration is a difficult one, and each region finds its own. But fundamentally, schools, or land use, or housing policy, or zoning, or highway investment, while administered or decided upon locally, by locally elected officials, have region-wide impacts, and those impacts must be acknowledged and accounted for.

Finally, our region deserves and should demand the most advanced, up-to-date, objective information with which to make decisions. Regional decision makers and residents need better, more easily accessible information on which to base decisions than they currently have. Some federally collected data is useful, but it cannot answer critical questions such as: What is the link between transportation spending and jobs in this region? How do immigrants contribute to the regional economy? What are the positive and negative cross-border spillover effects from large development projects? Where are different employment sectors located in the region, and why? We have an excellent foundation to build on—universities like George Mason University, George Washington University, Georgetown, Howard, and the University of the District of Columbia, government entities like the Washington Council of Governments, private research institutions like the Urban Institute, the Greater Washington Research Center and the Fannie Mae Foundation. These institutions perform excellent analyses of disparate trends and are an invaluable resource for our decisionmakers and opinionmakers.

However, much of the existing research is aimed at specific issue areas (e.g. welfare reform, demographic trends, housing) or limited to specific geographies (e.g. District only, Washington region generally). These studies are invaluable, but holistic assessments of the region—and the interconnectedness of its parts—are also needed. Therefore, we propose that area research institutions form a consortium dedicated to assembling, collecting, assessing and disseminating information on this region on a regular basis. Such a consortium could pool the complementary expertise that exists across the region. It could be funded from the private foundation community to ensure that its work is objective and independent. It could have an advisory group of corporate, civic, political and community leaders to ensure that its research projects are informed by real experience and that its findings reach area decision-makers. Chairmanship of the consortium could be rotated—from one major local institution to another—to ensure that all key institutions have a stake and are committed. It could be tasked to provide benchmarks for the region and inform us where we are succeeding and, more importantly, where we are falling short.





Conclusion

In many ways this is a blessed region. It has robust population and economic growth. It is the administrative capital of the nation and boasts an economy-driving technology sector, nationally renowned research institutions, universities and hospital centers and world-class airports. It is rich in history, natural beauty, and culture. Each year, our region attracts millions of visitors from across the country and around the globe. Thus, unlike many other regions in the country, the Washington, D.C. region is in a position of strength. It has choices. It can realistically envision a positive future. It can—to the extent any region can—control its own destiny.

At this point, this region can grow in two distinct ways. It can continue along the current path of current growth and development. This will probably involve regional collaboration on a few issues; most public sector decisions, however, will be made by individual counties and the state and federal governments. This course will lead, no doubt, to further wealth for some in the area and more economic activity for particular jurisdictions. But it also could leave certain places and people in the region further and further behind, economically and socially, and exacerbate traffic congestion and environmental degradation.

There is another option. This option will maintain and extend the economic competitiveness of this region. Without a strong economic base, few other social objectives can be achieved. But this alternative will equally emphasize the need to grow in a way that protects our environmental treasures, enhances quality of life, provides access to economic and educational opportunity for all residents and encourages economic activity within all jurisdictions.

Few regions in this country have chosen this second option, perhaps because few regions have the economic health and civic capacity necessary. For whatever reason, this path is the "road less traveled." It is not an easy one to take. Our market may be metropolitan; we may read the same newspapers, travel the same roads, watch the same nightly newscasts. Yet we are a region still divided by race, class, wealth, opportunities.

The challenge for the National Capital Area is to move beyond these divisions and embrace a future that is economically sound, environmentally sustainable and socially equitable.

Appendix

Number and Percent of Persons in Poverty, 1990 and 1996
Washington Metropolitan Area

Jurisdiction	Persons in Poverty		Percentage of Population		Percentage Change
	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990-1996
Central City					
District of Columbia	96,278	80,016	15.90%	14.80%	-16.89%
Core Suburbs					
Alexandria	7,732	4,663	7.00%	4.00%	-39.69%
Arlington	11,895	7,826	7.00%	4.50%	-34.21%
Total Core Suburbs	19,627	12,489	7.00%	4.28%	-36.37%
"Big Three" Inner Suburbs					
Fairfax*	29,864	21,617	3.50%	2.40%	-27.62%
Montgomery	31,651	19,407	4.20%	2.40%	-38.68%
Prince George's	41,282	21,774	5.70%	2.80%	-47.26%
Total "Big Three"	102,797	62,798	4.40%	2.51%	-38.91%
Outer Suburbs					
Charles	5,007	5,078	4.90%	4.40%	1.42%
Frederick	7,055	6,110	4.70%	3.40%	-13.39%
Loudoun	2,625	2,084	3.00%	1.70%	-20.61%
Prince William**	8,141	6,481	3.30%	2.20%	-20.39%
Total Outer Suburbs	22,828	19,753	3.88%	2.75%	-13.47%
Total Metro Area	**241,530**	**175,056**	**6.30%**	**4.32%**	**-27.52%**

**Fairfax data includes the Cities of Falls Church and Fairfax City.*
*** Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: 1990 – U.S. Census of Population; 1996 – Greater Washington Consumer Survey and the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George "Washington Area Growth and Change," 1998.

Welfare Caseloads, May 1999
Washington Metropolitan Area (In Ranking Order)

Jurisdiction	Total Number of TANF Cases	Share of Region's Caseload
District of Columbia	18,750	63.86%
Prince George's	4,383	14.93%
Fairfax*	1,466	4.99%
Prince William**	1,393	4.75%
Montgomery	1,114	3.79%
Alexandria	817	2.78%
Arlington	573	1.95%
Charles	389	1.33%
Frederick	315	1.07%
Loudoun	160	0.55%
Metro Area Total	**29,360**	**100%**

**Fairfax data includes the Cities of Falls Church and Fairfax City.*
*** Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: D.C Department of Human Services; Maryland Department of Human Resources, Family Investment Administration; Virginia Department of Social Services

Single Headed Families With Children Washington Metropolitan Area

	Single Headed Families with Children		Change 1990–1996		Percent of All Households in Jurisdiction	
	1990	1996	Number	Percent	1990	1996
Central City						
District of Columbia	36,151	28,031	-8,120	-22.50%	14.50%	12.10%
Core Suburbs						
Alexandria	3,445	3,958	513	14.90%	6.50%	7.00%
Arlington	3,801	4,367	566	14.90%	4.80%	5.30%
Total Core Suburbs	7,246	8,325	1,079	14.90%	5.50%	6.00%
"Big Three" Inner Suburbs						
Fairfax*	18,736	23,603	4,867	26.00%	6.20%	7.10%
Montgomery	18,483	20,853	2,370	12.80%	6.50%	6.80%
Prince George's	33,231	35,661	2,430	7.30%	12.90%	12.70%
Total "Big Three"	70,450	80,117	9,667	13.70%	8.30%	8.70%
Outer Suburbs						
Charles	3,043	2,893	-150	-4.90%	9.20%	7.50%
Frederick	3,338	3,625	287	8.60%	6.30%	5.70%
Loudoun	1,768	2,684	916	51.80%	5.80%	6.10%
Prince William**	6,227	7,134	907	14.60%	7.60%	7.20%
Total Outer Suburbs	14,376	16,336	1,960	13.60%	7.30%	6.60%
Total Metro Area	**128,223**	**132,809**	**4,586**	**3.60%**	**9.00%**	**8.66%**

**Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.*

***Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: 1990 - U.S. Census of Population: 1996 - Greater Washington Consumer Survey, Analyzed and computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990's."

Households with Incomes of $50,000 or More in Current Dollars, 1989 and 1996
Washington Metropolitan Area

	1989 (in 1989 $)	1996 (In 1996 $)	Change 1989-1996 Number	Change 1989-1996 Percent	Percent of All Households in Jurisdiction in 1990	Percent of All Households in Jurisdiction in 1996
Central City						
District of Columbia	70,227	69,900	-327	-0.50%	28.20%	30.10%
Core Suburbs						
Alexandria	20,646	24,696	4,050	19.60%	38.80%	43.60%
Arlington	34,230	37,391	3,161	9.20%	43.60%	45.60%
Total Core Suburbs	54,876	62,087	6,884	5.50%	41.60%	44.80%
“Big Three” Inner Suburbs						
Fairfax*	185,093	237,480	52,387	28.30%	60.80%	71.30%
Montgomery	155,908	202,666	46,758	30.00%	55.10%	66.40%
Prince George’s	104,908	124,914	20,006	19.10%	40.70%	44.60%
Total “Big Three”	445,909	565,060	119,151	26.70%	52.80%	61.60%
Outer Suburbs						
Charles	14,714	20,149	5,435	36.90%	44.70%	52.60%
Frederick	19,551	27,801	8,250	42.20%	37.10%	43.90%
Loudoun	16,278	26,949	10,671	65.60%	53.20%	61.10%
Prince William**	39,487	54,621	15,134	38.30%	48.20%	55.00%
Total Outer Suburbs	90,030	129,520	39,490	43.86%	45.40%	52.80%
Total Metro Area	**661,042**	**826,567**	**165,525**	**25.04%**	**46.40%**	**53.80%**

**Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.*
*** Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.*

Source: 1990 – U.S. Census of Population; 1996 Greater Washington Consumer Survey. Analyzed and Computed by the Greater Washington Research Center; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change in the 1990s," 1998.

Population by Race and Jurisdiction in the Washington Metropolitan Area, 1990 and 1996

	White		Blacks		Asian/ Pacific Is.		Other		Non-White		Total Population	
	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996	1990	1996
Central City												
District of Columbia	179,690	173,853	399,751	342,610	11,233	9,209	16,226	13,913	427,210	365,732	606,900	539,585
Core Suburbs												
Alexandria	76,907	68,850	24,557	31,022	4,687	8,986	5,032	6,898	34,276	46,906	111,183	115,756
Arlington	130,745	127,440	17,947	19,130	11,596	12,807	10,648	16,426	40,191	48,363	170,936	175,803
Total Core Suburbs	207,652	196,290	42,504	50,152	16,283	21,793	15,680	23,324	74,467	95,269	282,119	291,559
"Big Three" Inner Suburbs												
Fairfax*	691,684	698,656	64,647	84,972	70,745	94,485	20,708	27,687	156,100	207,144	847,784	905,800
Montgomery	581,379	581,773	92,375	129,550	61,774	72,697	21,499	36,949	175,648	239,196	757,027	820,969
Prince George's	314,559	238,684	369,622	475,519	27,922	30,323	17,165	24,214	414,709	530,056	729,268	768,740
Total "Big Three"	1,587,622	1,519,113	526,644	690,041	160,441	197,505	59,372	88,850	746,457	976,396	2,334,079	2,495,509
Outer Suburbs												
Charles	80,252	87,297	18,425	24,599	1,208	1,014	1,269	3,023	20,902	28,636	101,154	115,933
Frederick	140,114	165,139	7,961	10,487	1,379	2,734	754	2,358	10,094	15,579	150,208	180,718
Loudoun	77,053	107,369	6,293	8,870	2,084	4,980	699	3,122	9,076	16,972	86,129	124,341
Prince William**	209,326	236,408	28,336	40,195	7,888	10,533	4,827	8,742	41,051	59,470	250,377	295,878
Total Outer Suburbs	506,745	596,213	61,015	84,151	12,559	19,261	7,549	17,245	81,123	120,657	587,868	716,870
Metro Area Total	**2,481,709**	**2,485,469**	**1,029,914**	**1,166,954**	**200,516**	**247,768**	**98,827**	**143,332**	**1,329,257**	**1,558,054**	**3,810,966**	**4,043,523**

**Fairfax data includes the Cities of Falls Church and Fairfax.*

***Prince William data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: 1980, 1998 U.S. Census of Population; Grier, George, "Washington Area Growth and Change," 1998.

Percentage of Elementary and Secondary School Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Cost Meals by School District, 1997 (In Rank Order)

	Students Eligible	Total Enrollment	Percent Eligible
District of Columbia	56,446	76,880	73.40%
Alexandria City	5,360	10,463	51.20%
Arlington	7,621	17,848	42.70%
Prince George's	52,326	128,347	40.80%
Montgomery	28,380	125,023	22.70%
Charles	4,717	21,620	21.80%
Prince William**	12,072	56,647	21.31%
Fairfax*	27,080	145,971	18.60%
Frederick	5,152	34,632	14.90%
Loudoun	2,108	21,695	9.70%
Metro Area Total	**201, 262**	**639,126**	**31.50%**

**Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.*
***Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.*

Source: District of Columbia Public Schools; Virginia Department of Education; School Districts of Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties.

Percent Share of Non-Asian Minority Elementary School Students by School District, 1997 (In Rank Order)

	Non-Asian Minority	Total Enrollment	% Non-Asian Minority
District of Columbia	46,181	48,978	94.3%
Prince George's	60,179	73,895	81.4%
Alexandria City	3,998	5,636	70.9%
Arlington	4,093	8,198	49.9%
Montgomery	25,019	71,625	34.9%
Charles	3,873	11,746	33.0%
Prince William**	8,217	26,607	30.9%
Fairfax*	16,525	74,675	22.1%
Loudoun	1,405	11,041	12.7%
Fredrick	2,073	19,607	10.6%
Metro Area Total	**171,563**	**352,008**	**48.7%**

**Fairfax County data includes the Cities of Falls Church.*
***Prince William County data includes the Cities of Manassas Park and Manassas.*

Source: District of Columbia Public Schools, Maryland Department of Education; Virginia Department of Education.

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